

A *Gal 10 Ed*
VINDICATION
OF THE
Christian Church
IN THE
BAPTIZING
OF
INFANTS,
Drawn from the
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY
THEOPHILUS DORRINGTON,
Rector of *Wittresham* in *Kent*.

L O N D O N,
Printed for *John Wyat* at the *Rose* in
St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1701.



T O T H E

Right Reverend Father in G O D,

J O H N, *Lord Bishop of Chichester.*

My Lord,

AS I am oblig'd to the most grateful Acknowledgments I can make of the Favour and Kindness You shew'd me, first of any Person in the Church, upon the offering my self to be admitted to it; and this is a Debt which I must always charge my self with, and shall take care as well as I can to discharge: So I reckon my self bound in whatever Station I am, there to endeavour the best Service I can to God and his Church, which the Circumstances of it give me Reason to think necessary, and furnish me with Means to perform; that I may the better approve my self to Your Lordship, and You may have the less reason to repent what You then did for me. And this, as it has been part of the Incitement to other Undertakings, is such also to this present

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one, and shall, I hope, by the Grace of God, have the same Influence upon me still.

That which has engag'd me in this present Undertaking, is, That I find my self at present plac'd by the Providence of God, and the great Favour of his Grace the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in the midst of a Tract on this side the Nation, which is miserably over-run with the Errour here oppos'd, by vertue of the Influence which the late Confusion and Usurpation had in these Parts; and which seems to need and require a general Application of the Clergy, of these Parts especially, to the Endeavour to remove it, and to heal the Breach which it has made in the Church, and cure the Mischief it does to the Religion and the Souls of many People. And I the rather presume to seek and crave Your Lordship's Patronage to such an Undertaking as this, because a good part of that Tract, is by the Providence of God committed to Your Lordship's Oversight and Government in Matters of Religion; from whence I believe a Performance of this sort, which can be worthy of it, will be

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be acceptable to Your Lordship, and the more easily obtain Your Favour and Encouragement.

I have endeavour'd that this might do so; and therefore I have attempted to maintain the just Honour and Reverence of that Institution of our Lord and Master Jesus, which is the main Subject of this Discourse; while others are employ'd to give and promote the due Honour to his Divine Person. I have made the Work as full and compleat as I could, that, in as little room as might be, and with as little charge to procure it, all might be found and read that can be necessary to be consider'd in this Case. I have endeavour'd to make all things as plain as I can, and I believe, by less wise Judges than Your self, I may be thought to have insisted more upon, and more abundantly prov'd some Matters than I needed to have done: But this Your Lordship will see was necessary to be done for the better instructing and convincing the very Ignorant People who are involv'd in this Error. I have also, I think, compos'd the

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whole in an exact agreement with the Holy Scriptures, and that as we commonly find them interpreted, and applied to this matter, by the Ancient Church, and in conformity with the Doctrine of the Church of *England*; I am sure I did intend and design to do so.

I have likewise through the whole Performance been under the Awe of Your Lordship's great Judgment and Learning in Divine Matters; but am sensible, that after all my Endeavour I shall need, and therefore I humbly crave some Exercise of Your great Candour and Goodness in the Censure of it. And as I hope the Defects of it will be pardon'd to a good Intention and Design, so I hope and desire, that as they will shew how much I need, they will be the more likely to obtain Your Lordship's Prayers for me, and Your Blessing; while I shall be thereby so much the more,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most Oblig'd,

most Obedient, and most Humble Servant,

*Wittresham,
May 22. 1701.*

Theophilus Dorrington.

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S*Ince it appears abundantly, that it does not
satisfie any one Sect of the Dissenters from
the Church of England to enjoy the Liber-
ty of Exercising their Religion according
to their Desire, but every one does industriously
use all possible means to gain Profelytes, and draw
others to their Party, this must needs awaken the
Church to the greater Care of its People, to keep
them from being seduced into any of the Ways of
Error, and it justifies, if there were nothing be-
side to do it, the using all fitting Endeavour for
this, and to inform and reclaim those that are al-
ready seduc'd. For 'tis evident, as might be
expected from the Nature of the Thing, That the
Schism and Dissention from the Church encreases
both Heresie and Profaneness among us, and is
every where attended with great Licence and
Wickedness in Opinion and Practice: It encreases
likewise, and makes even a Merit of, Disobedi-
ence, and the Contempt of the Magistrate and
Humane Laws: And thus it is opposite in its Ef-
fects to the Glory of God, and the Salvation of
Men, and the Safety, Honour and Prosperity of*

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the Government and Nation. This must needs affect the Ministers of Religion if they have any of that Zeal and Concern which their Character and Function requires them to have ; That is, If they have a due concern for the Glory of God, and and to serve and promote the great Salvation, and the Tranquility, Strength and Honour of our Government and Country.

As the Dissention, indeed, is at present manag'd, and with the Liberty taken by it, in abuse at least of the Liberty given, it is extreamly difficult to us to satisfie our Religion, Loyalty, or Charity in this matter in our several Stations. Our People run after whom they please, and give no account of themselves. And tho' the Legislative Powers may think they have provided that none but such and such Principles of Religion shall be taught their People, and none but such as have sworn Subjection and Allegiance shall teach them, they are in common practice defeated in their Design ; because, as the Dissenters themselves, especially perhaps the sort of them concern'd in this Controversie, do not regard, whether those that teach among them be qualified as they ought to be by Law or not, and perhaps do commonly like the best those that are not ; so we that have the Charge of our People's Religion, have no Power even in our own Parishes to obtain Satisfaction in this matter, and none else will reckon this their Concern. And thus our People are utterly expos'd and abandon'd to be led by the Ignorant and the Heretical, and even by the Priests and Jesuits of Rome in disguise, both from the most important Principles

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Principles of Christian Religion, and from their Loyalty, and Allegiance, and to their certain destruction. And they will not hear what we can say to keep them from Evil, or convince them of their Duty, either in Publick, or in Private Conversations, but most industriously avoid us in both, as those who being evil hate the light, and come not to the light, least their deeds should be reprov'd. There is not any way left us then, I think, to satisfie our Obligations, with respect to them especially, but this: That we do by Preaching, and Writing, and Conference inform, as perfectly as we can, all those who do attend upon the Publick Ordinances, and that will correspond with us, in all the Points of Religion which are controverted between us, and the Enemies of the Church; and that we thus enable our own People to answer the Cavils of the Dissenters, and to confound their Preences and Principles of Dissention in their Conversations with them; who by virtue of Trade and Business in the World do often meet these People while they shun us, and can make them hear what is necessary to rectifie and inform them when we cannot do it.

And to induce our People to read carefully such things as these, and to apply themselves diligently to the Study and the Practice mention'd: It may be said, That without this they are outdone by the Dissenters in a Matter that is commendable and excellent, and fall under our Saviour's Rebuke, when he said, The Children of this World are wiser in their Generation than the Children of Light. The Dissenters, the best of them,

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*them, have a mighty Zeal for God, perhaps, but not according to Knowledge, and our People have not a Zeal answerable to their Knowledge, and as their Cause deserves. They are always busie to recommend their several Mistakes and Parties in all Companies, and mingle this Concern with all their Business; while we are apt to think the Goodness and Truth of our Cause shall recommend and defend it self, and that we need to do nothing for the service of the Truth while the Enemies of it are industrious against it. The common People among the Dissenters, one may commonly observe, tho' they are ignorant of every thing else in Religion, are fully instructed in all the Objections and Cavils against the Truth which their Party uses to make: If then our People are not well instructed in the Arguments for it, and the Answers to those Objections, they must be often ashamed of themselves in Conversation, when they are not able to vindicate themselves; and some weak Minds will be liable to the Temptation, to think themselves mistaken, and those wretched People to be in the right, and so to be led away with the Errour of the Wicked. For your own just Defence, then, and for your Credit, and that you may as the Apostle directs, be ready to give to any Man a Reason for the Faith that is in you, and that you may not your selves be impos'd upon by those that lie in wait to deceive, you should be advised, as much as you can have leisure and opportunity to do it, to study and acquaint your selves well with these matters. And it is a good Reason and Argument further for this, That you may thereby be inabled
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to perform a most excellent and glorious part of Charity to your Neighbours, and inform them of their Mistakes and Errours, and be instrumental to rectifie and save them. To perswade you thus to endeavour to accomplish your selves for, and to apply your selves in your several places to, this excellent work, let me put you in mind of what the Scripture says to encourage it, which may be applied to private Christians thus employ'd as well as to the Ministers of Religion; They that be wise ('tis said) shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever, Dan. 12. 3. Brethren, if any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him; let him know that he who converteth the Sinner from the Errour of his Way, shall save his Soul from Death, and hide a multitude of Sins, James 5. 19, 20. In the former of these Texts the Inducement which the Prophet urges for this lies in the Honour and Glory which will redound to any Man in the other World, from having been an Instrument to instruct the Ignorant, to reduce one that is wandring into the right way, and the bringing him to Rest and Happiness. And when we consider what our Lord and Master has done for the Salvation of Souls, we must needs believe it must be very honourable with him who is the final Judge and Disposer of Men to have imitated, and serv'd him in so blessed a work. And when we consider, that we must all come at length into another World, we must needs believe this will be highly honourable there, where the knowledge of true Excellency,

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cellency, and where Love do abound; and the happy Company above must for ever have the greatest regard to those who have been the Instruments of bringing the most of them to that Glory and Happiness. In the latter Text, the words of the Apostle contain a double Encouragement offered to excite Men to this glorious Charity. The first is, The Intuition of the Advantage to the Receiver of it, which is, the saving of his Soul, the dearest and most valuable Benefit which can be done to any Man. And methinks this is a mighty Inducement to this Endeavour which I am urging, the prospect of saving a Soul. I cannot imagine but every good Man must have a mighty sence of such a thing as this, and be most ready, most desirous, if he can, to be an Instrument in so blessed a Work. A second Inducement to this Charity, there, Is the great Advantage it will be to him that performs it, express'd in those words, And he shall hide a multitude of Sins; that is, God will most favourably accept, and will reward that Charity of him who has wrought so good a Work, with the free discharge of whatsoever Sins he has formerly been guilty, but has now repented of, for the sake of the Sacrifice and Propitiation for Sin which was made in the Death of Christ.

With these Arguments I would fain perswade all Persons in the Church to acquaint themselves well with all Matters of Controversie between us and the Dissenters, and then to apply themselves diligently to this excellent Charity, the Instructing others who are ignorant in the Knowledge of Religion, the informing those who are mistaken in
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the Error of their Way, and the reducing those to the Unity of the Church who are separated and fallen from it: I would engage Neighbours to endeavour the Conversion of their Neighbours, Masters and Mistresses to instruct and reduce mistaken Servants, and Relations their misled Relations. And I think it must be so obvious to every one's Thoughts, that it can scarce be necessary to add for an Inducement to this, That if you can be so happy as to succeed in this Endeavour, as you have a great deal of Reason to hope you shall be from the Blessing and Assistance of God in a Work which he has declar'd is so acceptable to him, this will encrease extreamly the Happiness and Comfort of Conversation, and that which all Relations may take in each other; this would render Neighbours more friendly and more serviceable to each other, and more confident in one another: This would promote the publick Peace and Union, and consequent Strength against every common Enemy; and we should live together with much more Advantage to our selves, if we could all with one Mind and one Mouth glorifie God.

There is another Argument and Reason by which I would excite my Reverend Brethren of the Clergy to a vigorous Endeavour to inform their People, and the People to apply themselves to learn as well as they can, what is said by the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism against this Practice of the Church, and what the Scripture affords us to say in vindication of it; and that is, That there have appear'd of late in Print, several Boasts of this Party of their Growth and Encrease, and
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some Complaints of it from others. 'Tis true, some of the Encroachments boasted of seem to have been made chiefly, if not only, upon another Sect of the Dissenters who distinguish themselves under the Denomination of Presbyterians; and I would hope 'tis only upon them, if at all, that they do encroach. I am sure it cannot be upon the Church without great neglect in the Ministers of their People, or in the People of themselves; but with all the Endeavour and Care of that other Sect, this of the Anabaptists may encroach upon them. They have had the Experience of half an Age to teach them, that the Principles in which they differ, and upon which they divide from the Church, are Weapons which may successfully be used by the other Sects against themselves; tho' they seem not yet to have the Happiness to be taught by so long Experience. They may call to mind, that they could not defend themselves against this Sect when they were in Power, but in spite of all they could say from the new Schemes and Principles of Divinity which they then impos'd upon the Nation on this Errour got ground, and this Party grew to threaten the treading them under foot. When they had made a Breach upon the Church and overthrown that, another Sect, which a Schism of long standing among themselves has form'd, under the Denomination of Independants did by the same pretences make a Breach upon them, and brought them under: And then the Anabaptists arose, and by the same pretences, further urg'd, prevail'd in pace against both. Indeed, whoever considers the matter well, he will find, that 'tis an easie passage from

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from the Presbyterians to the Independants, and from them but a small step to the Anabaptists, and from them 'tis but a very little way to the Quakers. And some at least of the dividing Principles of the Presbyterians, especially as they teach, or suffer, their common people to understand and apply them, if follow'd to their just Consequences, would, I think, oblige one to go even so far from the Church and the Truth, I am sure they betray weak and ignorant People, especially, to do so. And then 'tis no wonder, but is to be expected, that the other Sects should gain upon this when they have liberty, and especially when they have been found to do it even while this bad Power. I have Reason and Obligation in Nature, at least, to wish I could be serviceable to this Party, and to the reducing them to the Church, and therefore I cannot forbear to suggest some improvement which they might make of this Event to their Honour and Advantage. And I wish them to see and conclude (as they have all the reason in the world to do from what has been observ'd) that they can never establish themselves, and, that they would therefore at length lay aside the vain hopes to do so: And then they have nothing to do but to consider, what is most tolerable and fit for them to join with among the several pretences to 'right Religion and Truth about them, and to fall in and comply with that, and endeavour to support it. They have reason sure to comply with, and to use their Interest to support better, rather than worse. And if the Church be tolerable, at least to Lay Communion, they have no good reason, nothing that

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that can approve them to God, or a good Conscience, or to ordinary Wisdom, to justifie them, in setting up a separate Communion from it, and in abetting and protecting thereby, as they do, what is in their own Judgment Intolerable. I would wish them upon this occasion to consider seriously, whether is more tolerable, That the Ancient and Innocent Ceremony of the Sign of the Cross be applied to their Children after they are Baptized, or that they have no Baptism at all? Whether is more tolerable, to have some Bishops among the Ministers of Christ, or to have no Ministry at all, but to take away quite the Sacred Office, and commit the Divine Work to every dirty Hand? Whether it is best to allow the Church to decree and appoint Rites and Ceremonies of Worship which are few in number, certainly innocent in themselves, and very useful, and serving to promote the Solemnity and Gravity of Publick Worship, and the Edification of the Christian People by the Ordinances of Christ, or to have the Rites and Ceremonies of Christ's own most certain Institution despis'd and neglected as Carnal, and Jewish, and Needless? I would beg them to consider, that while they pretend the Difference between them and the Church of England is very small, and therefore they should be preferr'd before all others by the establish'd Church, they have certainly the less reason for their Separation from it; and they are altogether unexcusable, yea exceedingly liable to blame, in what they commonly allow themselves to do to maintain and save themselves harmless in that their Separation, while for this they can join with those who differ
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in the greatest and most important matters both from the Church and themselves, in their Endeavours to ruine and throw down the establish'd Church: They are found to encourage and protect by their Interest and Endeavours all the vilest Sects, and the worst Principles of Religion that the Nation is infested with. This is the dreadful Temptation which they run into, and fall in, by vertue of their Resolution to continue and maintain their Separation. They have reason sure to bear and comply with what is tolerable in the Church, rather than to incur the danger and likelihood of being made subject to what is intolerable under the Tyranny of Rome again, to which 'tis most certain their Division and the Methods which they use to maintain it, do expose and tend to bring us all.

I would improve this Event also for a Warning and Exhortation to the People of the Church to be stedfast to the establish'd Religion: If they should be so unhappy as to think it but a little deviation, if any, to fall in with the Presbyterian Sect, and suffer themselves, upon the Invitation of their Interest, to do so, they may see by this, that if once they leave the Church they cannot tell whither they may not run, nor where they shall stop: He that is but a little out of the way is in danger to wander far. And since 'tis much the Business of all the Discourses in the separate Meetings to recommend themselves and their mistakes, and to disparage the Church, it is to be known that it is the greatest Presumption, and a most dangerous Practice, and the putting

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one's self into Temptation to depart wholly from the Church, if any suffer themselves but occasionally, or out of a curiosity, which is certainly guilty, to add to the Number in those separate Meetings.

I would beg leave too of my Superiors to Improve this Event a little further; And to wish that it might be consider'd, while the Presbyterians, divided among themselves, are contending and drawing from one another, under the Names of Presbyterians and Independants; and the Anabaptists are contending with and drawing from them both, and the Quakers contending with and drawing from them all, and all of them are fighting against and drawing all they can from the Church, whether or no the Liberty of Religion as it is laid and used be a likely means to unite his Majestie's Protestant Subjects in Interest and Affection? Or whether the mildness of the Government therein, be not by the perverseness of the Sects abused, and their good design utterly defeated: And when it appears that those divided from the Church are and must be Crumbled and subdivided from one another, whether it be not evident that the only Basis, or Center, of Union in Religion must needs be the Establish'd Church: And the only and the best way to restore that Union and preserve it for ever, and to preserve the Protestant Religion and the Nation by it, in a time of the greatest and most imminent Danger, be not to strengthen and defend the Establish'd Church and inable it by wise and moderate Laws to support and maintain it self against

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the Sects, in such methods as the kind and gentle Nature of Christian Religion will allow to be used, which, I would say with Submission, I think the present state of things does hardly allow.

But to return to what does more strictly belong to our present purpose. I may say, That if it be so that the encroachments of the Sect which is chiefly concern'd in this Book are made upon others of the Dissenters, yet 'tis the concern of the Church to prevent and cure the Growth and Encrease of this Error and Sect if they can. As it must needs be the trouble and grief of all the Votaries of Truth to see any Errour prevail, and those who have a due Honour and Reverence for the Institutions of Christian Religion must be troubled to see those encrease who truly lessen the Esteem and Reverence of them, though they may pretend a greater Reverence than need be. It must grieve us also to see those who one would hope are most capable to be reconcil'd and united to the Church lose ground to them who are less so: And that our Divisions at such a time as this, which loudly calls for all that can be done towards Union and Concord among our selves, do thus grow rather more and more incurable. And if the Success of this Sect be mostly against the other Sects, yet we cannot chuse but see that their Endeavours are set against the Church too, and our People must therefore need to be fortified against their Clamours, and Objections. We are concern'd when they take the Liberty in Print to call themselves the Baptized Christians, as if none were so but they, and when they are
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call'd the Owners of a Despised truth of Christ, to wit, the Baptism of Believers; as if we disown'd and opposed this, and were the despisers of a Christian Truth upon this score, which is a most unjust reproach. We are concern'd when they take liberty to say in Print that our Baptism is null and void, that it is unlawful, and the profaning an Ordinance of Christ; when they represent it as a Popish Corruption of Religion, and load it with the worst Names, and the most odious Characters they can think of, that they may disparage it to Ignorant People, and Induce them to be rebaptized. We are concern'd when they tell our People, as they do in private in plain words, while perhaps they do more modestly imply it only in publick, that we are none of us Christians because we are only Baptized in our Infancy: When they by consequence unchurch us, and many Ages of Christianity. This is a terrible Excommunication and shall certainly be follow'd with all the most terrible Effects that ever follow'd a Popish one, if these people could get Power to follow it so: As we have reason to think, because their Party have done as much when they did get the Power, in some places for a little while, to do so; and because now in some places where they are numerous, and can do mischief, they combine together and set themselves to endeavour and do all the mischief they can both to the Ministers and People of the Church. We have reason then both from Religion and our safety and quiet to endeavour in such ways as Christianity will allow, to prevent or lessen the encrease
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and growth of this Error and Party. There have been many things written in our Nation, and in the Vulgar Language of it, to Justifie and Vindicate the Baptizing of Infants in the Christian Church. But the Leaders of the Party do still maintain and harden them in their Error, and pretend to answer all that has been said against it. They say they do Answer such things, and the poor People believe them. And while they do thus it seems necessary to write against them still, and to continue to expose their Error, lest Ignorant People should think they have at last made their Cause so good as nothing remains to be said against it.

Having thus Represented the Just Occasion, as I think, for this Undertaking; I shall now beg leave to add somewhat briefly concerning the Work it self, and then commit the Reader of this I hope to that. It must be said that the old Books written against this Error amongst us, have been the most of them written by the Presbyterians, in the time of whose Usurpation this Sect arose, and got such footing in England as the Church has not yet been able to remove. And thus it has been prov'd by the Event, as it may appear by their Writings that they are not able to confute these people upon their Notions and Schemes of Divinity. I saw myself oblig'd then, as by the Holy Scriptures, so, by the Necessity of the Case to take other measures; and because I thought their Books not only insufficient to serve our Peoples turn, but also dangerous to them, and apt to stagger and unsettle them in the Point rather than to Confirm them

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them in the Truth. There have been also several things written by the Church against this Error, and these I confess have every one of them that I have seen, I think, sufficiently confuted it, but I think it may be said of them that no one has done it fully. The Authors of them have contented themselves it may be only to urge some few Scriptures and Arguments in Vindication of Infant-Baptism, or only to Answer some of the chief Objections of the Adversaries; Or perhaps they have taken upon them to expose the folly of some silly Book written on the side of the Error: in doing which a man is confin'd to such a Book in a manner as his Subject, and is employ'd as much to confute the Man as his Error. Thus has this Controversy for the most part been by particular men handled but in part, and imperfectly as I may say, and I have seen the Adversaries make some advantage of this. Though among them all I believe this Error has receiv'd a full and abundant Confutation: And it must be because the Followers of it do not know, and have not consider'd the several things which have been written against it, or that they are wretchedly obstinate and perverse, that they are not yet convinc'd. But this state of the Case is indeed an apparent disadvantage to the Conviction of them; and I think it must be of use both to them and to all others, who are or may be concern'd in this Controversy, to have the whole subject Collected and Digested into one Book and in as little Room as might be, and this I have endeavour'd and is what I think I have done here. And I
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hope those who have best consider'd this Controversy will give me this Approbation, that I have here not only sufficiently but fully handled it: That I have in the Grounds and Foundation of Infant-Baptism propos'd a Source and Spring of Arguments from whence all that learned men may think the Scripture affords us beside what has been urg'd here may be deriv'd, and a method to use them to the best Advantage: And that I have also obviated and prevented, and provided for Answers to any other Objections and Cavils of the Adversaries, if they have any other to urge, besides those which are particularly Answer'd in the Third Part of the Book.

I have made it my business to represent as well as I could the true Nature of this Sacrament, and the right end, and use, and the Just Necessity of it: That I might recommend it as I ought to all who may have been tempted upon whatever Principles to think it indifferent, or needless, and might promote the due reverence and esteem, and serious use of it. And because the Work has upon these accounts a much larger aspect than upon this Sect only I have put my Address to them, perswading them by fit arguments to read and consider it, into the Conclusion of the Book, lest if I had put it before it might be thought by any at first view, that the Book does only concern them.

I pray now that it may please the God of Truth to bless this Undertaking to the service of Truth and Peace; And Grant that all who Profess and call themselves Christians may be led
into

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*into the way of Truth, and hold the Faith in
Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in
Righteousness of Life. To whom be all Honour
and Glory for Evermore, Amen.*

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Advertisement.

THE Binder is desired to take notice, lest the Book should be bound up Imperfect, That there are 3 Sheets marked k, l, m, to be inserted between the Signatures K and L.

A
Vindication of the CHURCH
IN THE
BAPTISING
OF
INFANTS.

The FIRST PART.

Being a Proposal of the Grounds, or
Foundation of Infant Baptism, ac-
cording to the Holy Scriptures.

CHAP. I.

*A General Scheme of the Grounds of Infant Bap-
tism.*

IT pleased the Creatour of Mankind to require
of them the Honour and Acknowledgment which
is naturally due from his Creature, and which
he had made them capable to render him. And very
justly did he, from the first require, and demand this,

as the Condition of his Favour to Man, and our Happiness therein. This appears in God's transaction with the first Man, and this is fitly call'd by Divines, God's Covenant with *Adam*.

This Method of Enjoying God's Favour and our Happiness, or this Covenant as we may call it, was constituted for all Mankind; not only for the first Pair, but for all that should descend from them. And it was constituted and establisht with this disposition and state relating to the Posterity of Mankind for ever; That if the Parents duly perform'd the Condition, and so remain'd in Covenant, the Children born of them should be reckon'd born within the Covenant: But if the Parents should break the Condition, and put themselves out of Covenant, the Children that should descend from them should be born out of Covenant.

To be in Covenant with God is to be actually engag'd and devoted to pay him due Honour and Acknowledgment, and to be therewith in a State of Favour with him, in actual right to and possession of his Favour and our Happiness. And then to be out of Covenant with God is to be broken off from a Devoted State, a state of actual subjection, and so to be also out of a state of Favour. It is, to speak it in short, a state of Rebellion and Misery.

The due Honour and Acknowledgment of God, which was the Condition of his Favour and our Happiness, was neglected and forsaken by the first Parents of all Mankind; And they by Sin fell into a State of Rebellion and Misery before they had propagated any of their Offspring; And so, according to this Constitution, all Mankind are born and come into the World in a State of Rebellion and Misery.

It

It pleased God, However, out of his Infinite Wisdom to find out, and from his Infinite Goodness and Compassion to allow, a relief for this wretched, and deplorable Condition of Mankind ; That he might not entirely lose his due Honour from this whole sort and Race of Creatures, and that this whole Race might not be incurably miserable. The Remedy provided and allow'd was this : The Son of God undertook, and was appointed, to assume and unite himself to the Humane Nature, and in that Nature to pay all that is due to God from it : To perform perfectly and fully, the Condition of Favour and Happiness, that we might rightly recover it again. And because we came under a new obligation by our Sin, even an Obligation to Punishment and Death, he undertook to answer and fullfil that also.

Upon this his Undertaking the Covenant with Mankind was renew'd, and the Method and Law of Happiness was again establish'd, but it was now establish'd with Him, as it was for his sake, and with Mankind in Him. And it was renew'd and establish'd, in a manner exactly Parallel to the former, so as that those united to him in an appointed Way should be thereupon, together with him, in Covenant with God : they should become under actual engagement, or be actually devoted to Honour and Acknowledge God, and in actual right to his Favour and their Happiness. And a way and method was always appointed to bring Men into this Relation to Him, that so they might with him be in Covenant with God as he did himself perfectly fullfil and perform the Condition of the Covenant, and so kept himself in Covenant with God.

It is not now establish'd or allow'd, that if the Parents be in Covenant, the Child born of them shall be born in Covenant ; Because the Covenant was not renew'd or made again with Mankind in *Adam*, but in the Mediatour who obtain'd it ; Therefore none can be in Covenant now but such as are in Christ, and

who become so in the Appointed Way. By our Natural Birth we are all in a State of Rebellion and Miserie; But in this way being translated from *Adam* to Christ, from the First *Adam* to the Second, we come to be in a State of Subjection to God, and of Favour with Him.

But this Favour is allow'd the wretched Posterity of *Adam* by this new Constitution, That if the Parent be in Covenant by Christ, his Children derive from him a right to the Sacrament, or appointed way of Admission into Covenant; and the Children are allow'd by God to be brought to Christ, to be so united to him as to put them into a Covenant-state, in the same way, and by the same appointed means whereby the Parents were admitted into that State. And this Privilege and Right extends to any Children that are theirs, whether they be born of them, or be as much at their disposal as if they were born of them; to such Children as are theirs, by Birth, Purchase or Adoption. And thus as all Infants come to be out of Covenant by another then themselves, they may have by another a right to be brought into Covenant. But still it is the Law and Constitution of the common Sovereign of the World, that none but those who are in Covenant themselves can derive the right of Admission to any Children that are theirs.

The Sacrament of Baptism is from the time of Christ by his Institution the common means and way of entering all Persons into Covenant with God, the means of uniting them so to him as that they shall be reckon'd in Covenant. It is now the means of bringing us by Christ into a State of Engagement and actual Devotedness to serve and honour God, and so also into a State of Favour with him, and of right to everlasting Happiness.

This is a general Scheme or State of the Grounds or Foundation which the Scripture affords us for the Baptising of Infants. I shall explain, as far as is necessary,

cessary, and prove some particulars of it: But only such as seem most necessary to our present purpose, because I would make this Work as short as it may be, and because I may more largely state and prove the whole of it, if it pleases God, in another Design. The Particulars requisite to the present Purpose to be made clear and evident are I think but these following.

1. That the Covenant with the first Parents of Mankind was made with this Disposition and State relating to the Posterity that should descend from them; that if the Parents did duly perform the Conditions requir'd, of Favour and Happiness, and so remain'd in Covenant with God, the Children born of them whilst they were in that Condition should be born in Covenant. But if the Parents should break the Covenant, and, by not performing the Condition, should put themselves into a state of Rebellion and Misery, the Children born of them should be also born out of Covenant, and in a state of Rebellion and Misery.

2. That all must, to recover the lost State, and be in Covenant with God again, Be by some way united to the Mediatour, and Incorporated or brought into one Body with him.

3. That altho' the Parents be admitted into the New Covenant by Christ, the Children are not born within that Covenant, but are according to the common Condition of Human Nature born in a State of Rebellion and Misery.

4. That from the time we do evidently find a Ceremony or Sacrament appointed to admit Mankind into Covenant with God again, we find the same allow'd and order'd to be Administred to the Children of those Parents who had been admitted by it.

5. That Baptism is now the Rite and Sacrament, and means of admitting all Persons into the New Covenant which is made with Mankind in Jesus Christ.

When I have said what is necessary to these Particulars, I shall suggest the Arguments for Infant Baptism which they afford, and which may be gather'd from them.

C H A P. II.

Wherein the First Particular of the foregoing General Scheme is Demonstrated.

THE Covenant with the first Parents of Mankind was made with this Disposition and State relating to the Posterity that should descend from them, that if the Parents did duly perform the Conditions requir'd, of Favour and Happiness, and so remain'd in Covenant with God, the Children born of them whilst they were in that Condition should be born in Covenant: But if the Parents should break the Covenant by not performing the Condition, and so should put themselves into a state of Rebellion and Misery, the Children born of them should be also born out of Covenant, and in a state of Rebellion and Misery.

The Truth of this Particular appears by the Event and is prov'd by Matters of Fact. That the Children should have been reckon'd in Covenant as soon as born if our first Parents had remain'd so till then, we may conclude from the Goodness and Justice of God. Who as he made other living Creatures, and all Herbs and Plants able to bring forth such as themselves, so he made the first Pair of Mankind with that ability too. And he certainly fram'd and design'd them to bring forth their Offspring in such Perfection as that they should be fit and capable to perform what was requir'd of them, and to be in a state of Favour with him, and should therefore be born in his Favour. As he would never by his own immediate Operation have made any Creature with such Imperfection as to be unfit

fit

fit and incapable to answer its end, and to be distasteful to himself, so neither would he by the Law of Nature, as we may call it, have establish'd the Propagation of Mankind to be with such Imperfection in what should be produc'd, and with such Displeasure to himself from it. For this had been by his own Order and Establishment to have set all Mankind in a State of Rebellion, and to have made them necessarily miserable, which things his Justice and Goodness which are Infinite would certainly forbid him to do.

But because our first Parents did not continue Innocent, nor perform the Condition of the Covenant, that part of the Proposition does not so much concern us as the other, which is; That upon their neglecting the Condition of Favour and Happiness and so falling themselves into a state of Rebellion and Misery, their Children should be born in a state of Rebellion and Misery. And this is prov'd I say, by the Event of the Fall, and by the common and notorious State of Humane Nature. It is evident that we are all obnoxious to the Divine Displeasure from our Birth, and that we are in a State of Rebellion, that the Byass and Propensity of our Nature is towards Evil, this we naturally and easily run into, but we must be taught, and disciplin'd, and learn and be constrain'd to do well. Both these things the Holy Scripture tells us and our own Observation confirms them.

The Holy Scripture represents the Humane Nature as universally corrupted and deprav'd, as prone to Evil, and averse to Good from the Womb. It says (*Gen. 8. 27.*) *The imagination of mans heart is only evil from his youth.* The Word there rendred Youth is the same with that which elsewhere is used for an Infant, as in *Exod. 2. 6.* The Holy Scripture says the Wicked *go astray from the womb*: that according to the State of Humane Nature *there is none that seeketh after God, there is none that doth good no not one*: *The carnal mind is enmity to God, and is not subject*

to his law nor can be. Now if this be the common State of Humane Nature it was without doubt determin'd and establish'd, that thus it should be with the Posterity of *Adam* if he should put himself into a State of Rebellion. It was determin'd that upon his Sin he should lose that Perfection and Excellency whereby he was fitted and inabled to pay his due Acknowledgements to his Maker, and then that he should propagate his Nature too with such Imperfection. Out of an Unclean thing must come that which is Unclean, and from a Creature alienated from God, and in a state of Rebellion, that which is propagated must be in the same State. This had not been without his Sin, but is the event and consequent of that, and does therein appear to have been the Divine Constitution or Law.

From hence it necessarily follows, or with this it is necessarily connected that the Posterity must be born out of Favour with God. He cannot be pleas'd with the Creature that is possess'd with Enmity against him. As Man was made at first he was very good, having the Image of God upon him, but having lost that Image he could be no more very good nor pleasing to him. Accordingly the Holy Scripture tells us, that we are all by Nature Children of Wrath. We are all born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards, and begin to feel Woe and Misery as soon as we come into the World. The Consequents of the fall upon the immediate Posterity of *Adam* prove this: As our first Parents were turn'd out of Paradise, and made to know that they had forfeited Happiness, their first Children were, and all their Posterity are, born out of it. The Happiness which they lost their Children wanted, they were born out of Paradise, and never suffer'd to return to it. As the Parents might not after their Sin, eat of the Fruit of the Tree of Life, so neither were the Children allow'd to do it, they might not receive the Sacrament of a Happy Immortality, because this was forfeited, and the Humane Nature lost all right

to it. And as our first Parents were condemn'd to Misery we find all their Posterity liable and condemn'd to the same. It cannot be denied but all the Posterity of *Adam* are liable to Misery from the Womb, and therefore this is not attempted. But there are those who will have it that this attends us without Guilt, that we are not born in a guilty State, or a State of Rebellion. On the contrary, the Apostle *Paul* plainly lays this upon the score of Guilt in *Rom. 5. 19.* and says expressly, *by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.* And this he certainly says according to the whole Tenour and Scope of Holy Scripture, and suitably to the Nature and State of things. Indeed we cannot otherwise understand the Justice of our State of Misery as the Case is with us. For we are not only liable to Misery, which is no more then what from the Nature of things belongs to us as Creatures, for a Creature as such is a Being that is mutable, and we may be liable to Misery justly enough: But this is not all; we are condemn'd, appointed to Misery, 'tis the Portion allotted, and assign'd to us from the Womb. *The ground is cursed for thy sake, (said God to Adam) In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy Life: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground, for out of it thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.* And this Doom and Sentence we find all his Posterity do lie under, and *man is born to trouble,* as *Job* speaks. But this sure cannot be our Case without Guilt. And if it be fairly consider'd it must needs appear a real Objection against the Justice of God to condemn and doom a multitude of Innocent Beings to Misery, but none at all to order that if the first Pair of Mankind should contract Corruption and Guilt, the Children born of them should come into the World in the same State, and be deprav'd and guilty too, that they should be accounted as a traiterous brood, as in a State of Defiance of the common Sovereign

vereign of the World, and in a State of Wrath accordingly. And to the proof of this State of things we see Infants suffer in common Calamities with their Parents continually : God's Judgments come upon the World for Sin, and involve those who can have no actual Sin to answer for, as the best of Men must be reckon'd to have, who sometimes may suffer in such Calamities. It is not to be doubted but multitudes of Infants were drown'd in the common Deluge in the time of *Noah*. Infants do not derive any Guilt from the Sins of their immediate Parents, nor is it this that they suffer for with their Parents: The Holy Scripture contradicts this in saying, *The soul that sinneth it shall die, and the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father* ; to bear iniquity according to the Language of Scripture is to suffer for Iniquity, nor is that the Case here : The Posterity of *Adam* do suffer indeed by, but not for, his Sin, they suffer for their own Guilt, they are Sinners as the Apostle says by his Disobedience, they derive a guilt from him according to the State and Disposition of the Covenant or Law, of Happiness which was propos'd to, or establish'd with him ; They do not suffer in Innocence then but under Guilt, and such as is accounted theirs, otherwise their suffering were not agreeable with the Divine Justice. This Exposition of this Matter seems to be clearly and fully vindicated in the Conference which it pleas'd God to hold with *Abraham* concerning the Destruction of *Sodom*, and the Neighbouring Cities, *Gen. 18*. *Abraham's* Plea for the sparing them was, that there might be some righteous Persons among them, and he says to God, *wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked that be far from thee : shall not the judge of all the earth do right ?* And God in his Answers to him allows this that it is not just to do thus, and therefore he will not do it, and says to the particular Case, *I will not destroy those Cities for tens sake* ; that is if ten righteous Persons could be found there. But can we think that there

there were not ten Infants in four Cities, for so many were destroy'd. If there were any they were not righteous then it appears by this History, but suffer'd under Guilt, and this must be the common Guilt of Humane Nature deriv'd from the Sin of the first Pair according to the State of the Covenant establish'd with Mankind in *Adam*.

I do not think it necessary to my present Purpose to insist any longer upon the Proof of this here, because it is acknowledg'd by many of the Adversaries of Infant Baptism, as we may charitably suppose.

All that have qualified themselves to be teachers among them according to the Tenour of the Act for Exempting, &c. have profess'd to own it, in professing to acknowledge and subscribe to the Ninth Article of the Confession of our Faith: Which expressly says, *Man is of his own Nature inclin'd to Evil, and this State of Nature in every Man born into the World deserves God's Wrath and Damnation.*

And the same thing is confess'd by as many of them as have assented to that Confession of Faith which was publish'd by some of this Perswasion in the Year 1688. For in the sixth Chapter of that Confession the Title of which is, *of the fall of Man, of Sin, and the Punishment thereof*, speaking of the Sin of our first Parents in eating the forbidden Fruit, they say thus, in the second and third Sections of that Chapter: "Our first Parents by this Sin fell from their Original Righteousness, and Communion with God, and we in them. Whereby Death came upon all, all becoming dead in Sin and wholly defil'd in all the Faculties, and Parts of Soul and Body. And they being the Root, and by God's Appointment standing in the room and stead of all Mankind, the Guilt of Sin was imputed and corrupted Nature convey'd to all their Posterity descending from them by ordinary Generation, being now conceiv'd in Sin, and by Nature Children of Wrath, the Servants of Sin and all other

“ther Miseries, Spiritual, Temporal and Eternal, unless the Lord Jesus sets them free.

This is a Confession said to be put forth by the Elders and Brethren of many of their Congregations in *London*, and in the Country. I must observe here that those Words, *unless the Lord Jesus set them free* must mean together with the rest, that all are in the Condition describ'd, under Guilt and Misery, *till the Lord Jesus sets them free*; all are born in that Condition by or in their Natural Birth, and then are not set free from it by the Lord Jesus. For I find that Expression so understood by the Ignorant People as to make the Article contradict both it self and the Scripture. They think and will say all are born in such a Condition by Nature but are set free by Jesus Christ, that is they are born under such a Condition, but are not born under such a Condition, all are born under it, and yet are freed from it by Jesus Christ. But certainly it might be easy to see that if they are born under it they are not free from it. None that are born under it are in their Natural Birth free from it. And their Interpretation of it contradicts the Scripture too in the Words of our Saviour, who says in *Joh. 3. 3. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

If then they sincerely mean according to the apparent and consistent meaning of this Article they have acknowledg'd that the Condition of all Mankind by Nature or Birth is, that they are in a State of Rebellion and Misery. And if this be the Event of *Adam's* Sin, it was without doubt order'd that it should be so, and then the Covenant with *Adam* had that Disposition with relation to his Posterity which I have said it had.

C H A P. III.

Wherein the Second Particular of the Grounds of Infant Baptism, according to Holy Scripture is Demonstrated.

WE have next then to demonstrate, that all must, to recover the lost State of Subjection and Favour be by some way united to Christ the Mediatour, in whom the Covenant was renew'd with Mankind, and for whose sake a Law and Method of Happiness was again granted to us, and they must be incorporated or brought as it were into one Body with him.

To keep to the propos'd brevity here as much as I can, I shall suppose that the Son of God is the universal Saviour, by whom all from the beginning of the World have been brought into Favour with God, according to the meaning of these and the like Scriptures, he is the *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*; and *the same yesterday, to day and for ever*. And then all that I shall now take upon me to prove is, that all who are brought into Covenant with God must be in some way united or incorporated into one Body with him. By our Natural Birth we are all join'd to the first *Adam*, and are as it were of one Body with him, and so partake with him in the Condition which he fell into upon breaking the Covenant made with Mankind in him, or the Method and Law of Happiness which was establish'd with him. And to be partakers with the Mediatour in the State which he kept himself in, of Righteousness and Favour, we must be translated from our first Parents, and be united, and become of one Body, with him. To make this matter the more clear and evident, I shall distinctly make good these four Things. (1.) That we may recover this State of Subjection and Favour by Christ

Christ as we lost it by *Adam*. (2.) That this Favour of Admission into the New Covenant is obtain'd but by some of Mankind. (3.) That to obtain it we must be united or incorporated into Christ. (4.) That Mankind were always thus joyn'd or incorporated into Christ by some solemn Right and Ceremony, wherein they took upon them an Engagement to pay and perform the due Honour and Acknowledgment of God; and that this Rite and Ceremony was the Sacrament of Baptism, or the outward washing of the Body with Water, as we have very fair and probable Grounds to believe.

1. That we may recover this State of Subjection and Favour by Jesus Christ as we lost it by *Adam*. This the Apostle intimates in saying, that *Adam* was the Figure of him that was to come, meaning Christ, *Rom. 5. 14*. He tells us to this Purpose also, that *As by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, so by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification of Life. For as by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of one shall many be made Righteous*, in 18. and 19. Ver. of that Chapter. And in the whole Paragraph of his Discourse from whence these Expressions are taken he evidently makes a Parallel between *Adam* and *Christ*, so as to signify that all Men are undone by the one, and sav'd by the other, and in a Parallel, or in a like way. Again, in 1 *Cor. 15*. He insists upon this Parallel and says, *Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept, for since by Man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*, vers. 20, 21, 22. Again, he calls Christ the Second *Adam*, and the Second *Man* to this Purpose: *The first Man Adam (says he) was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickning spirit? and the first Man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the Lord from Heaven*, in 45. and 47. vers. By all which ac-

cording

according to the Tenour of the whole Scripture he suggests that Christ is to Mankind in respect to their Salvation what *Adam* is to all in respect of their miserable and lost Condition.

2. But it must be observ'd in Holy Scripture that this Favour of Admission into the New Covenant or a State of Salvation by Christ is obtain'd but by some among Mankind. 'Tis said indeed of him, that *he tasted Death for every Man*, and that he was in his Death *a Propitiation for the sins of the whole World*: And he is call'd the *Saviour of the World*, Joh. 4. 42. 1 Ep. Joh. 4. 14. Which is to denote that he stood in the stead of all as *Adam* did; he transacted with God as Head of all, and what he has done is sufficient to the Salvation of all: But these Expressions do not signify that he is with effect the Saviour of all, or that all Men shall actually be sav'd by him. He was undertaker for all to repair the Damage and Mischief done to all by the first *Adam*. But for all this we find through the whole Scripture the Benefit which accrues by Christ appropriated to a select Body of Men: And we have every where Intimations given us, that this comes to pass thus; that a method and way was always appointed to bring Men into a Communion or Participation with the Mediatour, which Method some among Mankind do comply and fall in with, and some do not. We may say the New Covenant is dispensed or Men are entred into it according to a certain Law, and in a prescrib'd Way and Method. Which Method brings those who do comply with it into a State of Subjection and Favour, but they who do not so, remain in the deplorable and lost Condition, into which all Men fell, in and with the first *Adam*. From one end of Holy Scripture to the other we find some among Mankind spoken of under a distinct Character from the rest with relation to Almighty God; which distinct Character, we are, wherever we find it, led to understand as given to those to whom the Favour
of

of Admission into the New Covenant was afforded.

In the times before the Flood, tho' we have very little account of the Religion of those times, and so but little account of the Method, and way propos'd and appointed of coming into Union with the Mediator, and into Covenant with God: Yet we find some Expressions concerning those times which signify that there was then such a thing establish'd, which some did comply with; and some neglect. That there was a Religion from the beginning of the World, and a Religion founded on Faith, and by consequence a Method of Salvation propos'd, and complied with by some, appears in the Sacrifices of *Cain* and *Abel*, the two first Sons of *Adam*. Of whom the Apostle says, *By faith Abel offer'd a more acceptable Sacrifice than Cain*. Again, we may believe, that those who complied with the way of Salvation, and publickly associated themselves in Religious Assemblies to profess and show their Obedience to, and Compliance with it, are spoken of *Gen. 4. last ver.* where 'tis said that in the days of *Enos*, who was the third from *Adam*, then began Men to call upon the Name of the Lord. It might be rendred, then was it begun for Men to be call'd by the Name of the Lord. As signifying, that then began a distinction to be made between the Religious, and the Irreligious by Name, between those in Covenant with God, and who minded the way of Salvation, and those who did not. And those who did so were call'd by the Name of the Lord, they were call'd by such a Name as spoke them to be peculiarly devoted or appropriated to God, as being peculiarly his Servants and Favourites. These are spoken of again, we may believe, in *Gen. 6. 2.* under the Name of *the Sons of God*. Where we find that the promiscuous marrying of these with the profane and careless part of the World occasion'd and brought on such a general decay and overthrow of Religion as induced the Divine Justice to destroy all Mankind, saving

ving only the Family of One of the Sons of God, which was done by an Universal Deluge of Water. And we may the rather believe those who complied with the Method of Salvation then, are call'd by that Name there, because we find afterwards such are call'd by that Name in *Joh. 1. 12.* where 'tis said of the Christ, that *so as many as receiv'd him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God.*

From the time of the proposing this Covenant to *Abraham*, and the appointing Circumcision to be a Rite of Admission into it, this Body of Men are commonly call'd the People of God; he who is Proprietour of all Men, whose we all are, yet reckon'd them his People in a peculiar and eminent way. Afterwards we find them call'd by the Names of *Jacob* and *Israel*, because they did chiefly consist of the Natural Descendents of the Men so call'd, and it pleas'd God to order the Method of Salvation so, as that those who would comply with it must be join'd to that Body of Men.

This Number or Company in the New Testament are spoken of under several distinguishing Names and Characters, and their Union, or Incorporation into Christ is there most fully and expressly mention'd. They are call'd the *Church* and *Body of Christ*, are said to be his *Members*, are said to be *in Christ*, which Expressions, and the like, do all signify that they do in a peculiar manner belong to him.

3. This brings me to the third Branch of this Particular, because we cannot well consider the New Testament but we must needs see, that to obtain the Favour of Admission into the New Covenant, we must be united or incorporated into Christ. The Apostle *Paul* speaks of this select Body of Men, as *cut out of the Olive Tree which is wild by Nature, and ingrafted contrary to Nature into a good Olive Tree*, *Rom. 11. 24.* Evidently designing to signify their removal from *Adam* to *Christ*: By Virtue of which he says they

come to partake of the *root and fatness* of the Good Olive Tree, as he there speaks; that is, they derive among other Benefits of the New Covenant, and the Purchases of Christ for Mankind, the Rectifying and Sanctifying of Nature from the pure and holy Jesus, which they had receiv'd corrupted and deprav'd from the first *Adam*: According to what St. John says, *Of his fulness have all we receiv'd, and Grace for Grace.* That all must be in some way incorporated into Christ in order to their Salvation by him, appears in what the Apostle says, *Eph. 2. 12.* where he speaks of those who are so united to Christ under the Name of the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and of those who are not so as Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, without Christ, and without Hope. In *Gal. 3. 29.* the Apostle says to the Christians at Galatia, *If ye are Christs then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the Promise.* That is, ye are entred into Covenant with God, and have Right to all the Favours purchas'd by Jesus Christ for Mankind, if ye are Christs; which plainly speaks a peculiar Relation to him necessary to Salvation by him. He says in *Rom. 8. 1.* *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,* to the same purpose. This is evidently intimated also in those Scriptures which speak of a Body of Christ. The Apostle says to the Church of Corinth, *Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular,* *1 Cor. 12. 27.* This Body of Christ is also his Church, *Col. 1. 18.* where 'tis said of him, *he is the head of the body the church.* And 'tis this Body of Men to whom his Salvation is appropriated in *Eph. 5.* The Apostle says, there, *Christ is the head of the church, and he is the Saviour of the body,* in 23. ver. He says farther in 25, 26, 27. ver. *Christ lov'd the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.* This Church

Church, he says, Christ does *nourish and cherish*, 29. ver. and speaking of the Persons whereof it consists putting himself among them, he says, *We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*, 30. ver. This Church is that which he is said to have *purchas'd with his own blood*, Act. 20. 28.

By all this it appears that notwithstanding Christ is a common Undertaker for all Mankind, and what he has done is without doubt sufficient to save and benefit all; yet there are but some of Mankind who will be sav'd by him: And this comes to pass by Virtue of a Method and a way appointed to Men to be partakers with him, or to be in Covenant with him, which Method and way of coming thus into a State of Salvation some do comply and fall in with and some do not.

4. We have good Ground to believe that Mankind were always thus join'd or incorporated into Christ by some solemn Rite and Ceremony; Wherein they took upon them an Engagement to pay and perform the due Honour and Acknowledgment of God, and that this Rite and Ceremony was the Sacrament of Baptism, or the outward washing of the Body with Water.

The New Covenant is indeed made with Mankind in Christ, as it is for his sake establish'd; but we must believe it agreeable with the Nature of things, as that was which was made with *Adam*, and we must understand, and interpret it so, or we shall interpret it wrong. As, then, the first Covenant was so made with *Adam* that his Posterity would have been in Covenant if he had remain'd so, they would have been born in a State of Favour with God, and actual Subjection to him: In like manner the New Covenant is so establish'd with Mankind in Christ, that they who are united to him, and are, as we may call them, his Posterity, do come under actual Subjection to God, and become engag'd and devoted to obey and acknowledge him, as well as they come to have a Co-

venant-right to his Favour and their Happiness. There is no being in Covenant with God without this. The very Nature of a Covenant includes Engagement on both sides between those who are in Covenant. As we come into Covenant *by* Christ, then, it must be said we come into Covenant *with* him too. He did not fulfill the Condition of the Covenant on Mans part to excuse us from it; as it would not have sufficed the Posterity of *Adam*, if he had perfectly fulfill'd the Condition of the Covenant; but they, as they would have come into the World in a State of Subjection, and actually devoted and engag'd to Honour and Acknowledge God, so they must every one in his own Person have fulfill'd that Engagement as they had become capable to do so. The reason of this is because we are under natural and indispensable Obligation to Honour and Acknowledge God according to the Discoveries he shall at any time make to us of himself and his Will. And as the Great God did not loose his Right by *Adam's* Fall, but Mankind remain'd under Natural Obligation to obey and acknowledge God (tho' they did not remain under actual Subjection and Engagement to this, as a State of Rebellion includes Obligation to Obedience with the Refusal of Obedience:) So neither does the Undertaking of Jesus Christ design to excuse us from paying what is naturally due, but we must in and with him come under actual Subjection, and be engag'd and devoted to pay what is due:

It is easy to make good this State of the New Covenant against the false and absurd Schemes of Religion, which some would impose upon the Church of God, and I may perhaps do it at another time, but it would be somewhat a digression from the present design to do it here. I shall therefore suppose for the present, that as we come into Covenant *by* Christ, we do, and must, as I said, come into Covenant *with* Him. That which unites us to the Mediatour, and incorporates

corporates us into Him, is a solemn engagement to pay to God the Honour and Acknowledgment which is due to him. We have somewhat else to do besides expecting our Salvation by Christ; and that is, we must be engag'd to perform and pay to God what is due on Mans part, to perform the Conditions of his Favour and our Happiness; and this engagement, as we become capable to do it, we must actually fulfill.

That which I have to make good, then, as properly belonging to my present design is this; That Mankind were always directed to some Rite and Ceremony, in the use of which, they came under this engagement and were so incorporated into Christ; and that this Rite and Ceremony was the Sacrament of Baptism, or the outward washing of the Body with Water.

That some External Rite and Ceremony was always appointed by God to express our entring into Covenant with him, and Engagement to Honour and Acknowledge him, we have good reason to believe from the Nature of Man; who being made up of a Body and a Soul, 'tis very suitable to him, and therefore agreeing to the Wisdom of God to appoint, that Spiritual things should be represented by, and joyn'd with, some outward and sensible ones: That the Religion of Mankind should, as we may speak, consist of a Body and a Soul too, of somewhat outward as well as somewhat inward: That as it should not be all Bodily acknowledgement of God; so neither should it be all, and only Spiritual acknowledgement. The Homage of both Body and Soul is due to God, and both may pay him some acknowledgement, and therefore he may justly and fitly require some of both. It is very fit then that the inward resolutions, or state and disposition of the Mind, should be attended with and express'd by some agreeing outward actions of the Body. In the state of Innocency God thought fit to require outward as well as inward acknowledgement from Man. And as he was to acknowledge God the Owner and Lord of all

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things, in his Heart and Mind, he was to express this, and to do it also in suitable outward Action and Behaviour. We have good reason to believe that the Fruit which he was forbidden to Eat of, was yet to be cultivated by him as well as the rest, and that it was because this was reserv'd to God, and set apart, to be offer'd to him as a Religious acknowledgment of his Sovereignty over all things, that therefore Man was forbidden to eat of it himself; and then this is an early instance of the appointing the inward Devotion of the Mind, to be attended with and express'd by some suitable action of the Body. And as Man's Duty to God was appointed to be outwardly express'd by some External Action and Behaviour, so God's Favour to Man was in that State design'd to be convey'd and assur'd by somewhat outward and sensible too: And the Tree of Life was to have been to Man a Pledge, and perhaps a means of a happy Immortality. Thus did God deal with Mankind at the first in a Method suitable to the Nature which he has given him, and we may reasonably believe he continued to do so after this, since Man remains still consisting of a Body and a Soul.

We have reason to believe there always was some Rite and Ceremony appointed by God for the Admission of all Persons into Covenant with him: Because we find that for a good while, even from the time of *Abraham* and the Appointment of Circumcision, there has been such a thing. For the Case of Humane Nature being common, and always the same, since the Fall, all being in need of a Salvation, and design'd to be brought to it by Jesus Christ, it is but suitable to the Wisdom of God to pursue, as we may say, the same End, by the same Method, especially when that Method, as does appear by what was said before, is most suitable to the Nature of things, and proper to accomplish his end. It is not a good Argument that there was no such Constitution as this from the

the Beginning of the World that we find not the express mention either of any such Institution or Practice. We have very little account of the Religion of the World, especially of the times before the Flood, nor do we absolutely need more than we have; but as there was a Religion among some and that which was acceptable to God, so there might have been such an Institution as this, tho' it be not expressly related.

And as it is very probable upon what has been said that there was always some sensible Rite and Ceremony appointed by God in the using of which Men should be engag'd in Covenant with him, or devoted to his Service: So there is Ground to believe that this Rite was Baptism, or the washing of the Body with Water, from the Beginning. There are some things may induce us to believe that God would institute such a Rite as this for such purpose, if any at all; and some things may induce us to believe that he *did* so.

That he *would* institute such a Ceremony, if any, for this purpose we have reason to believe, from the Natural fitness and aptness of such a Ceremony to represent the thing intended to be signified, and to be perform'd by it. There is a natural Fitness in the washing the Body with Water to represent the Resolution of the Mind to put away all the Filthiness of Sin. And then as he that washes his Body with Water that he may be clean, signifies that he would be so, and does therein profess a Design to keep himself so, as well and as long as he can; this is a fit Rite to signify and represent the engaging our selves to live a pure and good Life. The aptness of the Ceremony to represent the thing signified will be likely to keep the Mind of Man intent upon the inward and spiritual Thing which is signified by it, and to secure the inward Performance of what is signified by the outward one. And then it is very agreeing both to the Infinite Wisdom, and the Goodness of God to appoint

for an outward Token and Sacrament of such an Engagement, an Action and Ceremony which is in its own Nature so fit to represent what is signified and represented by it.

Again ; The common Custom of all Nations, from the beginning, of washing new-born Infants from the Pollutions which they bring into the World with them makes this Rite, of washing the Body with Water, very fit to represent what is intended in the Religious use of it, and so makes it very probable and likely that God would appoint it for such purpose. An Infant new born enters upon a new State, begins to live in this World, and begins this with washing away the Pollutions which before were about him. So he that by washing used as a Religious Rite signifies, and engages to, the putting away all Sin and Wickedness, and the devoting himself from thenceforth to the service of God, does enter upon a new kind of Life by washing himself, and is as it were in an Infant-state ; which made our Saviour doubtless say to his Disciples, *except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.* The World then in this civil Custom, as we may call it, was always disposed to use washing for a Religious Purpose, which is much of the same Nature, it being the putting away the Pollution of Sin, and the entering upon a new Life, the engaging and beginning to live after a new sort. And Men would be the more ready to mind and to comply with the Religious Significancy of this Ceremony, when it is a thing so parallel, and of a like Nature, with that which was so commonly done by it, when it was used as a civil Custom and Practise. It was the more fit and proper to be appointed for this, and therefore, it was the more likely and probable that the Divine Wisdom would do it.

That this Custom of washing Infants new born was ever known and practised in all Nations we have good Ground to believe. The Prophet *Ezekiel* re-

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fers to this as the Custom of the Jewish Nation in *Ezek. 16. 4. 5.* And we find such mention of it in Heathen Authors, as speaks it to have been common with other Nations besides the Jews. It is observable that the Heathen Poet whom *St. Paul* quotes in one of his Epistles to *Titus*, when he says, some of their own Poets had said the *Cretians are always liars*, he does in the same Poem where that is said speaking of the Birth-place of their Jupiter say: *Here thy Mother after she had brought thee forth, strait sought a running Water in which she might wash the Uncleaness of her Offspring, and purge thy Body.* (*Callimachus Hym: in Jovem. ver. 16. &c.*) The like thing we find refer'd to by the very Learned *Plutarch, Qu. Rom.* and spoken of, as a common and ancient Custom. When he speaks of one *Aristinus*, who had been reported in his Country to have been dead, and when he return'd and appear'd to be alive he was directed to undergo the same things which were wont to be done to new born Infants, among which this washing was one: And the Author says *Aristinus* was not the first, who in like case had done thus, but it was an Ancient Custom to do so. And then it must have been an Ancient Custom with the *Grecians* to wash Infants that were new born.

As this Ceremony and Rite of entring into the service of God, was upon this Account very proper and fit to make Men attend to, and do the better, the thing signified and undertaken in it, that is the being in an Infant State, and the entring upon a new and a pure Life; so it had this effect upon Men we know, and did make them consider themselves in the taking of Baptism as new-born, and as coming into the Condition of Infants with respect to a new Life. And as *Aristinus* did, according to Ancient Custom in his Case, submit to be wash'd as an Infant, so he submitted to be swaddled too, and to be fed with Milk or suckled: In like manner in the early times of Christianity

anity we find that those who were upon their Conversion to Christianity baptized, tho' at grown Years, they were wont to receive Milk and Honey, *ad Infantandum*, as *Tertullian* speaks; that is to represent and signify their being as it were in an Infant State, and their entring upon a new Life. These things make it very agreeable to the Wisdom and Goodness of God to appoint our Spiritual new Birth to be signified and undertaken in the washing with Water, and so they make it very likely and probable that he *would* set up such an Institution from the Beginning.

It may be added that this is extremely proper and agreeable to the Nature of things; when 'tis administered to Infants as a Religious Ceremony to signify and represent the sinful Pollution which they come into the World with, as well as they come with bodily and outward Pollution; and their Engagement to put away that, and not to live according to it, but as devoted to God. And it might reasonably and fitly enough be directed to be applied to Infants, to teach the World the Misery and Pollution which all are born under and come into the World with, and to be a relief and remedy of this Condition to Infants, who are not capable of any other, that their Salvation in case of their dying in Infancy might be thereby secured.

For farther Confirmation of the use I am now making of the common Custom of all Nations to wash Infants new-born, I shall add: That the turning a Practice to a Religious Use and Significancy, which the World commonly used out of Necessity, or for Convenience is justly by a Learned Man (*Huetius Qu. Alnet. l. 2. cap. de Sacramentis*) made parallel with what we find in Scripture said concerning the Rainbow after the Flood, which we have in *Gen. 9. 13, 14, 15, 16.* ver. where God says, the *Rainbow* should be a token of his Covenant and Promise to Mankind, that the Waters of a Flood should no more destroy Mankind

kind from the Face of the Earth. The *Rainbow* we know is a Natural Thing, and comes to pass by ordinary natural Causes, and must come to pass without a Miracle, when things are in that Disposition and State which causes such an Appearance: And it did appear, we cannot doubt, before the Flood as well as since it; yet has it now pleas'd God to make this an Assurance that he will no more bring a Flood over all the Earth. Thus we see 'tis agreeable with the Wisdom and Goodness of God to make an outward and sensible Thing the assurance of a Divine Favour; and then we may believe it agreeable to him also to appoint outward Actions and Ceremonies to represent and signify our inward and spiritual Engagements, and to appoint such Actions for this as were used by Mankind for some outward Necessity or Convenience. And then it must be easy to believe that he *would* turn the common Custom of washing new born Babes from their Bodily Pollution, into a Religious Ceremony, and appoint washing of the Body to represent and signify the putting away all Sin and Wickedness, and the devoting our selves to serve and honour God, and so to become the Sons of God.

These Reasons there are to induce us to believe that God *would* appoint the Sacrament of Baptism for a Rite of entring Mankind into Covenant with him from the Beginning: There are other, too, which give us Ground to believe, and do make it very probable, that he *did* establish this Rite for such purpose.

I imagine it is not contemptible to say we have Ground to believe Baptism was appointed for this use and purpose in that we do not find any other Rite or Ceremony for a long time instituted for such purpose. We know of no other Rite appointed from *Adam* to *Abraham* certainly, we see the fitness of appointing some outward Rite for this Purpose, and the Agreeableness and Fitness of this, both in the Nature of the Thing, and by Virtue of a common Custom in the World,

World, and therefore may justly believe God did appoint this. But we have other Grounds to believe this.

One of the things which render it highly probable is; That we find the Religious use of washing to have been very early in the World: That it was used as a Ceremony to represent and signify the putting away Sin and Wickedness, and engaging in the Service and Acknowledgment of God. We find this done by very good Men, who were acceptable to God in their Religion, and in peculiar favour with him, as will appear when we know the Persons were *Jacob* and *Job*. We find that *Jacob* used Baptism as a Solemn Rite of putting away Sin, and engaging in the Service of God; and that *Job* refers to it as a Rite of Spiritual Purification, and Cleansing.

We will first consider what is said of *Jacob* to our purpose, who is supposed to have been somewhat the elder of the two, for *Job* is thought to have liv'd during the sojourning of the Children of *Israel* in *Egypt*. His using of Baptism as a Rite and Ceremony of entering into Covenant with God, or engaging to Honour and Acknowledge him, we find mention'd, *Gen.* 35. where we read in 1st. ver. that God commanded *Jacob* to go to *Bethel* and dwell there, and there to build an Altar to him, or to set up his Worship. In 2d and 3d. ver. we are told, *Jacob said to his household, and to all that were with him, put away the strange Gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your Garments; And let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an Altar unto God.* The Good Man resolv'd now to make a thorough Reformation in his Family, and to engage all that belong'd to it in the Service and Acknowledgement of the true God. The occasion of his saying, *put away the strange Gods from among you*, is thought to be this. He had brought several Servants with him from *Mesopotamia*, and they 'tis likely retain'd the Idolatries and Superstitions of the Country

Country from whence they came : And he had taken perhaps other Servants from among the People of the Land of *Canaan*, where he now dwelt, who might be engag'd in the same Corruption of Religion with the rest of their Country. Or it may be that his Sons by Conversation with the People of the Land had been induced to receive some Images of their false Gods, and might have learn'd and practis'd their Idolatrous Worship. Some think that till now *Jacob* did not know of the Images which *Rachel* stole from her Father *Laban*, and brought with her from *Mesopotamia*, and this spoken with Relation to them. A very Learned Man (*Dr. Lightfoot. Harm. p. 466.*) thinks this spoken with Relation to those of the *Sichemites*, who had been preserv'd in the general Slaughter mention'd in the foregoing Chapter. These were to be solemnly admitted, says he, into the Church of God ; in order to which, *Jacob* enjoyn'd them Three Things : To relinquish their Idolatry, to wash their Bodies, and to change their Garments. The Company to be admitted, says he, were Females, for all the Males had been slain ; therefore he used a Sacrament, which Women also are capable of. However it came to pass, there were the Images of false Gods till now in *Jacob's* Family, and they had been worshipped by some of it. But now he resolv'd to banish them all, and to take those Persons off from all false Religions, and engage them in the true one, that they might Worship and Acknowledge the true God only, and be in a state of Favour with him. And to enter them into this State, which was the bringing them into Covenant with God, he bids them be Clean, and change their Garments. It is commonly understood by Jewish Writers, and the thing it self is very evident, that in bidding them be Clean, he meant they should wash their Bodies with Water, or be every one Baptized. This was to be the Initiating Ceremony, and a Sacrament of putting away what was evil in their Life and Practice,

Practice, and their engaging and entring into the service and acknowledgment of God.

Let us now Consider what is said by *Job*, with relation to a religious use, of washing the Body to put away Sin and Wickedness. His words to this purpose in *Job* 9. 30. are these, *If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean.* He certainly speaks here of such Washing and Cleansing as would render a Man acceptable with God, and therefore not of Cleansing himself from outward filthiness of the Body, but of Cleansing from inward filthiness of the Mind and Soul, from the pollution of Sin. And he speaks of putting away this evil, or of engaging to this in and by the Ceremony of Washing. And then he evidently intimates herein, that this was a common and usual Rite in his time for such purpose as has been said. His Words in connexion with those that follow them, seem to signify thus: *Tho' I should by the usual Solemnity of Washing never so often repeated, signify and engage to the putting away from me all filthiness of Heart and Life; Yet shalt thou plunge me in the Ditch, and mine own Cloaths should abhor me:* That is, according to the best interpretation that I can find of it, *Thou wouldst, notwithstanding this, cover me with filthy Ulcers, and make my nearest Relations abhor to approach me.* (*Si. Patrick Bishop of Ely's Paraphrase on Job.*) And 'tis agreeable to the general scope of *Job's* discourses in this Book, to understand him thus; which seems to be to maintain, that sometimes evil Men were prosperous in this World, and good Men afflicted.

Now to make our use of these two Instances, we may observe, That as *Jacob* is found here in the Practice and use of this Rite as a solemn Ceremony of Religion, and *Job* refers to it; they both intimate it to be acceptable to God. They were both of them accepted by God in their Religion; and therefore we may believe they used no Rite but what was acceptable

ble to him; and we may believe they would use none but what they knew was so: And then they must know this by God's immediate direction of them to use it, or they must be assur'd by certain Tradition, that God had formerly appointed it. And indeed they intimate it to have been in their times usual, and to have deliver'd to them from their forefathers, to have been an ancient Rite belonging to the true Religion from before their times. As we do, I think justly, believe the Religion of Sacrificing appointed and directed by God himself at first, because we find it practised very early by one said to be accepted of God in it (which the Apostle says of *Abel* the immediate Son of *Adam*) tho' we do not read any express mention any where of God's instituting that: In like manner we may upon this ground, from the Instances now mention'd, reasonably believe that the Sacrament of Baptism for the purposes mention'd was at first appointed by God too, and that it was perhaps a Rite of true Religion from the beginning of the World, immediately after the fall of Man.

But if God himself may be found certainly and expressly to have directed any in ancient times to use this Ceremony as a Rite of entering and engaging themselves in Covenant with him, we have therein very fair and probable ground to believe, that it was at first used by his direction and appointment, and from thence to conclude that it may have been a Rite belonging to the true Religion from the beginning. And we certainly find that God directed the whole Body of the Nation of *Israel*, to such an use of this Ceremony when he was first forming the Jewish Church in the Wilderness. The account of this we have in *Exod. 19* which we shall particularly consider. In the 5th verse of that Chapter God proposes and offers to that People his Covenant, as we may call it; that is, he offers to have a peculiar Favour for them, and to take them for a peculiar Treasure to himself, above all People.

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But withal he lets them know what he would expect from them, and on what Conditions they should thus peculiarly belong to him ; that to this purpose they must engage to obey his voice, and keep his Covenant, by which Word he means his Commandments. In the 7th verse we are told *Moses* came to the People, and brought to them these Proposals from Almighty God. He *laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him.* In the 8th. ver. we have the Peoples answer to these Proposals, wherein they express their readiness to comply with them. *All the people answer'd and said, all that the Lord hath spoken we will do ;* and *Moses* return'd the words of the People to the Lord. Here we have their profess'd Consent and Readiness to enter into Covenant with God. And then we shall see in what follows, that they were to be engag'd in it by Baptism. God says to *Moses* in 10th. ver. *Go unto the people and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their cloaths,* and this was done, it is said in the 14th. ver. This is understood by Jewish Writers to have been a Command that the whole Nation should be entred into Covenant with God by Baptism. They say in that Command of God to wash their Cloaths, the washing of their Body was Indicated and Included : And this there are other places of Scripture which give us Ground to believe : For we find those reckon'd to be unclean who were order'd to wash their Cloaths, *Levit. 11. 25. Levit. 14. 47.* We cannot think their Uncleaness was to be put away by washing only their Cloaths, but it was without doubt implied and understood that in this Command they were order'd to wash their Bodies also. And it might lead them to understand this Command thus always in that they were also for Uncleaness, directed exprelly both to bath themselves, and wash their Cloaths, as we see in *Levit. 15. 10.* But, besides this, *Moses* is order'd here to sanctify them which is understood to mean he should Baptize them. And *Moses*

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was allow'd two days time to do this in, the Number being very great who were to be thus sanctified; and we may reasonably believe he perform'd it by sprinkling Water upon them, so as it might fall on several of them at once, and that he had, besides, the help of *Aaron*, and his Sons, if not of other Levites too, as his Ministers in the Work, to perform it within the time appointed.

Thus we see that God has anciently directed to the Use of Baptism, as a Rite and Ceremony of Engagement to obey and acknowledge him, or of entering into Covenant with him: And then we may very reasonably believe, that when we find it before this practised by good Men, as it does therein appear to have been an ancient Rite of true Religion, so it was at first directed and appointed by God himself: And that it has been appointed from the beginning of the World, as there has been Reason and Occasion for it ever since the Fall of Man, which happen'd in the first Parents of us all.

We have further some Ground to believe this in the Ground we have to believe, that the Jewish Church through all Ages from its first Establishment used this Ceremony as a Rite of engaging all Persons in the Service of God: And there are several things which make this highly probable.

That it was an usual and common Practice in that Church in our Saviour's time, we have two Circumstances in the Evangelical History, which may induce us to believe. The one is in *John* 1. 25. The great Council of the Jews had taken notice of the Baptism of *John*, and they sent Priests and Levites to him from *Jerusalem*, to examine him concerning it. And when they had asked him whether or no he were the Christ, or *Elias*, that is, the same Person who was caught up into Heaven in a fiery Chariot, or a Prophet, meaning perhaps, one of those that had liv'd before among them, and he denied that he was either of these: They

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ask him then in 25. ver. *Why baptisest thou then if thou be none of these?* We may observe the Question is not what Baptising meant, but what was the meaning of his Baptising, by what Authority, or to what End he baptised. They came to know who, and what he was, and what he pretended to in Baptising. And this intimates plainly enough that they were acquainted with the Custom of Baptising those that would engage in the Service of God as a Solemn Rite of such Engagement, but wonder'd at his using it, and applying it to those who had already been baptised and entred in the Jewish Religion. Another Circumstance in the Evangelical Story which makes this probable, we have in our Saviour's Discourse with *Nicodemus* in 3d. Chapter. Where after our Saviour had said to him in 3d and 5th Verses, *Except a man be born again, and born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven,* and had said somewhat more to confirm this in the following Verses: *Nicodemus* answered and said, ver. 9. *How can these things be?* And our Saviour says to him, *art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?* Tho' it had been an usual Practise in the Jewish Church to admit all Persons into that, or into Covenant with God by Baptism, there might be some Ground for *Nicodemus* to wonder at our Saviour's Discourse, and for his Difficulty in understanding him, when he spoke of the Necessity of being baptised to enjoy the Benefits which the Messiah would afford Men, because he might perhaps imagine that the Jews being all entred into Covenant with God already, and Baptised, were therein qualified for all Favour which could come by the Messiah. And our Saviour might rebuke him who was a Master in *Israel*, for that he did not understand that a new State of Religion, would be set up by the Messiah, and that all Persons might fitly be requir'd to be entred into that by Baptism, as they had been into the Jewish Religion; for that he did not apprehend it as fitting and necessary that People

ple should be baptised into Christ as well as they had been baptised into *Moses*. This then is a plain Intimation too of this use of Baptism in the Jewish Church in our Saviour's time.

And if it was used in his time we may reasonably believe those Jewish Doctors, who tell us it was an ancient and constant Usage in their Church. Those who are acquainted with their Writings do know they say; That by three things *Israel* entred into Covenant with God, which were Circumcision, Baptism, and an Oblation: This is said of the Males of Native Jews, and that they say their Females entred into Covenant by Baptism and an Oblation. They say also that when any of the Heathens would embrace the Jewish Religion, their Males were initiated by Circumcision, Baptism, and an Oblation, and their Females by Baptism and an Oblation. And they found this Custom of thus entring Profelytes from among the Heathen on *Num. 15. 15.* where 'tis said, *One Ordinance shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth among you:* Which shews they reckon'd the Admission of the Native Jews by these Ceremonies, to have been done by an Ordinance and Institution of God.

And tho' we do not evidently see that Baptism for this purpose was appointed at Mount *Sinai* for a standing Ordinance in the Jewish Church; yet it might be used and practised constantly among them by the Advice and Order of their Governours, with the Direction and Approbation of those Prophets whom God rais'd up among them, as a Relick of the Ancient Religion of the World, and what their Forefathers had been acquainted with, and practis'd by the Direction and Appointment of Almighty God. And it was an Encouragement to them to continue this, to see that by this Sacrament and Ceremony God himself had expressly order'd their whole Nation to be engag'd to keep his Laws and Commandments, as we have seen he did in the 19th Chapter of *Exodm.* This evidently

show'd that he allow'd of this Rite still, that he did not design it should now be laid aside, and might reasonably encourage them to continue the use of it tho' without an exprefs Command to do so. Besides they knew their Females together with their Males, had been by God's Order and Appointment wash'd, and so entred into Covenant with God at Mount *Sinai*; for the Command was to sanctify them all, and it made no difference of Age or Sex, it exempted none. But their Females after this had no Sacrament to enter them into Covenant unless they administred this to them. And yet we find it exprefs enough, that Females were reckon'd in Covenant with God as well as their Circumcised Males. We may therefore reasonably believe they were entred by this Sacrament.

And if this Sacrament was used by the *Jewish* Church in our Saviour's time as an initiating Rite, we have the more reason to believe it was at first appointed by God himself, and by him allow'd to be practised still, in that we do not find our Saviour any where reprovng the Jews for it, tho' in his Discourse with *Nicodemus*, he evidently relates to it. Our Saviour condemn'd the Corrupt State of the *Jewish* Church in his Times, for such Rites and Traditions as by which they made void any Laws of God, but he no where condemns them for this Practise: From whence we must conclude that they did not in this make void any Law of God, or do that which our Saviour thought worthy of blame: And if this had been a blameable Corruption of their Religion, it is not to be imagin'd that our Saviour would have appointed it for a standing Ordinance in the Christian Church.

Some perhaps may say: What account can be given why it should please God to enjoin the bloody and painful Sacrament of Circumcision, if he had appointed this of Baptism before, and would continue it still for a Rite of Admission into Covenant with him? And that unless some Reasons worthy of him can be assign'd for

for this, they cannot believe this Appointment of Baptism by him, or the constant use of it to be by his Order. But to such it may be answer'd that some account of this may be given, but together with it an account should be given of the whole Law of *Moses*, and of the burden of those numerous, costly and troublesome Ceremonies which he was pleased to add to his Religion in the Times of the Jewish Church, and to do this would be somewhat a Digression too from the present Undertaking, and therefore may be omitted here.

I proceed then to the last particular I have to produce which renders it highly probable, that Baptism for Spiritual Purgation, and as a Rite of entering into Covenant with God, or of engaging to pay him due Honour and Acknowledgment, has been appointed by God from the Beginning, and is a Rite belonging to the old Religion of the World, and that is this; that we find a Religious use of washing in the most ancient Accounts we have of the Heathen Religions of the World. We find that they anciently used Washings for Purgation and Cleansing of the Soul, and the putting away what was thought Evil and Sinful: That they used them thus to prepare and fit themselves for Divine Worship, and to make themselves the more acceptable to the Deity. We find they used washing as a Ceremony and Rite of entering and engaging into Religion: And we find it applied to Infants among them for their Purgation and Cleansing, and for devoting them to God.

That they used washing the Body with Water for Spiritual Purgation, and to put away the Guilt of Sin which we shall see is one End and Business of the Sacrament of Baptism we find plainly in their Writings. This is signified in those Words which the *Roman* Poet puts into the Mouth of *Hippolytus* when he was tempted to a monstrous Wickedness which he refus'd to commit: (*Quis me eluet Tanais, &c.*) what mighty River or vast Lake, (says he) shall wash me from

the stain of such a Sin? Not all the Oceans Waters could ever make me clean. (*Seneca in Hippolyto*) *Ovid* says of the *Romans*. Their Ancestours believed all Sin could be purg'd away by washing of the Body, and that they learnt this peice of Religion from *Greece* (*Fastorum* l. 2.) Tho' indeed he afterwards derides them as too Credulous, who could believe the Guilt of Murder can be wash'd off with Water. Much before the time of both these the *Greek* Philosopher *Plato* (in *Cratyl*) makes *Socrates* say, Purgation, Purification, Washing and Sprinklings did all design this one thing, to render Mankind pure in Body and Mind: As I find him quoted by a Learned Man. (*Pfannerus Syst. Theolog. Gentilis purioris: cap. de Sacramentis.*) This Expression intimates his Notion of this Rite to be, that it was a Solemn Engagement to Purity and Good-Living as well as a means to put away Guilt.

That they used by washing of the Body to prepare themselves for Divine Worship, and render themselves the more acceptable to the Deity, we also see in what we find said of their Religion: And then they used this Rite without doubt as an Engagement to keep clean, as well as for a means to be so, at present. The most early Instance of washing among them for this Purpose is reckon'd to be that of *Pharaoh's* Daughter mention'd, *Exod.* 2. 5. at the time when she found *Moses* then an Infant floating upon the Water in an Ark of Rushes, and sav'd him. We find a certain *Greek* Poet quoted by *Eusebius*, (*Prep. Evang.* l. 9. cap. 28.) who speaks of this washing of hers as a Lustration, or for spiritual Purification. So likewise *Clemens* of *Alexandria* seems to understand, that her washing (*Strom.* l. 1. p. 343. ed. col. 1688.) who says, On that Day she came to the River to use Washings and Sprinklings. And we find an ancient Learned Jewish Author speaking of the same thing as Religious Washing (*Philo. in Vit. Mosi* l. 1.) He says the King had but this one Child, and she had been for sometime married

married, but could have no Child, which she mightily desired to have, and that it might be a Son, to inherit the Throne of her Ancestors. With this Concern lying heavy upon her Mind she went on that Day to the River, where the Child (*Moses*) was expos'd, and being about to use Washings and Sprinklings she found the Child. Thus he speaks, and therein makes it reasonable to suppose she came to wash, to prepare her self in the most solemn manner for her Devotions, that she might be the more acceptable to the Gods she Worship'd, and obtain the great desire of her Soul. It is observ'd by a Learned Man, that the Word which I have rendred Sprinklings, and which is used by the two last mention'd Authors, is that which the Heathens used to signify that Application of Water which was used to them at the entrance of their Temples, when they went in to their Devotions, (*Spencer de Leg. Hebr. l. 3. cap. 2.*) which he proves from the Character of Superstition in *Theophrastus*, cap. 16. where he applies that Word to that Rite. This may then I think be accounted an Instance of washing to purify and prepare for Worship. But we have also several others mention'd in the Greek and Latin Authors, I shall produce but some of them. *Clemens Alexandrinus* (*Strom. l. 4.*) points us to two Expressions in *Homer*, one of the most Ancient Writers of the *Grecians*, which relate such an Usage. He says of *Penelope*, that when she had wash'd her self, and put on clean Garments she went to her Prayers. This we have in the Fourth Book of his History of *Ulysses*. A like Expression that Father quotes again, which we find in the Second Book of the same History concerning her Son *Telemachus*. Who, the Poet says, retiring from Company went to the Sea side, and washing his Hands made his Prayer to *Pallas*, which Prayer the Poet there relates or makes for him. And this *Homer* is judg'd to have liv'd and wrote so early as about the time of *Ahab*, King of *Israel*, about nine hundred Years before the Birth of

our Saviour. (*Seth. Calv. Chronol.*) A very Ancient Writer among the *Romans*, who is judged to have flourish'd about two hundred Years before our Saviour's Birth, refers to the same Usage amongst them. In one of his Comedies he makes one say to another; *If you have no Commands for me I will go purify my self, or wash, that I may offer Sacrifice*: And another he makes to say; *Now I will wash, that I may go to Worship*, in the same Comedy. (*Plautus, Aulularia*) These Expressions evidently refer to this as the common Usage of the *Romans* in his Time.

It was also usual with the Heathens of Old to enter and engage in any Religion by the Ceremony of Washing themselves. One says Lustration, which the *Grecians* call'd Purifying, is of old accounted one of the most necessary Ceremonies of Initiation; which *Orpheus*, having learnt it from the *Egyptians*, brought into *Greece*. (*Diod. sic. l. 4. in Hoffman Lexic.*) *Tertullian* tells us, (*De Bapt. c. 5.*) That Men were thus entered into the Religion of *Mithra* under which Name the *Persians* worship'd the Sun, and into the Religion of *Isis* in *Egypt*: And the *Grecians*, 'tis well known, did thus Initiate Men into the *Eleusinian* Religion, which was instituted in Honour of *Ceres*, to whom they ascribed the furnishing them with Bread-Corn. And *Tertullian* tells us, these Initiations they used as a sort of Regeneration. *Isocrates* an Ancient Greek Author speaking of this thing, says it was their Belief, that the Initiated would not only live the more happily here, but also would have a fortunate Death, and that they had hopes of a better Life for ever after this, as we may understand his Words. (*Panegyric.*) Especially if we observe what *Cicero* says concerning the same thing, (*Lib. 2. de Leg.*) who speaks of these Religions there, as Divine things, and as what had brought Mankind from a wild and Savage Life, to Humanity and Civility, and of the Initiations or Entrings into them as truly the Beginnings of Life, and as the method

method and course of living happily, and to die with a better Hope. So that it appears they accounted these Initiations which were perform'd by washing themselves, as Engagements to what they thought a good Life, and as the way to Happiness, which makes their Notions of them very parallel to what is the End and Design of our Baptism. And it may be observ'd that these two last mention'd were Men of great Learning, and must be reckon'd among those who best understood the meaning and design of all their Usages and Customs of Religion.

In the Ancient Religion of the *Romans*, we find the Lustration of their Infants on the 8th or 9th Day after their Birth, which was done by Sprinkling them with Water. This *Macrobius* tells us of in these Words (*Saturnal. l. 1. c. 16.*) *Nundina* is a Goddess of the *Romans*, call'd so from the 9th Day after the Birth which is call'd the Lustration, or purifying Day. For the purifying Day (says he) is that on which Infants are purified and receive their Name. And this is done to Male Children on the 9th Day, and to Females on the 8th. And we find *Tertullian* speaking of the Superstitions which the Heathens used about new born Children as what were design'd to devote them to the Gods they worship'd. (*De Anima. cap. 39.*)

We have an Account of Religious Washings used among the Heathens of the *East-Indies*, which we may believe to be a very old Religion, in that they were found to believe the World Peopled from one Pair, who were made immediately by God. They have also a Tradition of *Noah's Flood*. It is a Command of their Religion to wash themselves often in their Rivers, and they say the Custom of doing so began with the Second Age of the World, by which they mean the time which immediately succeeded the Universal Deluge: And they say it was instituted by God for a Remembrance that the World was destroy'd by a Deluge of Waters for their Sins. The Circumstances of
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their Religious Washing we are told are these. They besmear their Bodies all over with the mud of the River, by which they design to represent and signify the Natural Corruption of Mankind. When that is done they turn their Faces towards the Sun, and the Brachman or Minister of Religion pronounces aloud this Prayer, *O Lord this Man is filthy and impure as the Mud of this River, but as the Water can carry away this Filthiness, be pleased to cleanse him also from his Sins.* This being said, they plunge themselves three times over head into the Water. Then with a certain Dye they stain their Foreheads to signify, as they say, that God has mark'd and chosen them for his People : So that they reckon this Washing as a Dedication of themselves to Religion. They are said to wash their Infants also, and then to give them their Name, and to reckon them therein become the Children of God, or devoted to him. (*Lord's Hist. of the Rel. of the Banians.*)

Now to make the use intended of these Evidences that this Solemn Washing for putting away Sin and Wickedness, and for devoting Men to God, has been an old and common Rite, even of the Heathen and False Religions of the World. And to show that this, at least together with what has been said of *Jacob* and *Job*, makes it highly probable that it has been always a Rite of true Religion, and so was appointed by God himself from the beginning, I desire these following things may be observed.

The true Religion, and the Rites belonging to it had Advantage to pass from the Old World to the New by *Noah* and his Family. * *Noah* lived himself six hundred Years with the People of the Old World : And he was a just Man, and walked with God : And God said to him, *I have seen thee Righteous before me in this Generation, and with thee I will establish my Covenant.* *Noah* then did steadily adhere to, and observe the true Religion. And not only so, but the Scripture tells us,

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He was a Preacher of Righteousness to the Old World.
 He set himself to urge and persuade others to observe and be steadfast in it too. And then we cannot doubt but he set himself after the Flood to teach and maintain it in his own Family, and to continue it among his Descendants, with whom he liv'd after the Flood, three hundred and fifty Years. And we cannot doubt but he taught and urg'd it with Efficacy, and good Success for so long time as he liv'd; while the fresh Remembrance of the terrible Deluge, which had destroy'd almost all Mankind from the Face of the Earth, could keep alive in Mens Hearts the fear of God, and the dread of provoking him. The true Religion then had these Advantages to continue it for so long after the Flood. And it had Advantage to continue much longer yet among the Posterity of *Noah*, by the long Life of *Shem*, the Son of *Noah*, who was one of them that had been preserv'd in the Common Deluge: Who liv'd five hundred and two Years after it, through the whole time of the Life of *Abraham*, and to fifteen Years of the Life of *Jacob*. We may observe too that about fifty Years, as we may judge after his Death, we find this Baptizing a Rite of true Religion by the Practice of *Jacob*: And a good while after him we see Reason to think it was such still, by the Reference to it in the Book of *Job*. Now when we consider that, as the Apostle says, *God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell, on all the face of the earth*, and *Moses* tells us, that *of the three sons of Noah the whole earth was over-spread*; and that there were these Advantages for the continuance of true Religion, and of the Knowledge of the Rites belonging to it for a long time among the Nations descended from this Family, we may very reasonably believe this Rite to have been deriv'd from the true Religion, to the false ones of the World, and that the Heathens receiv'd it by Tradition from these Fathers of the World. We may very reasonably think that when Men began to fall

fall away from the true Religion, they did rather corrupt then forsake it, that they did not forsake it entirely, but took and retain'd some Rites and Usages belonging to it. And as we know they retain'd the Religious use of Sacrifices, we may believe they did generally retain to the Religious Use of Washings. And we may the rather be induced to believe this in that we find this Usage continued in the Corrupted Religion of *Egypt* among some of the Posterity of *Cham*, not long after the time of *Job*: And we may observe that the Heathen Authors which have been referr'd to, do some of them represent this Usage as deriv'd from *Egypt* by the *Grecians*, and from *Greece* by the *Romans*.

And thus I think I have made it appear that we have good Ground to believe that Mankind were always directed to some Rite and Ceremony, in the Use of which they became engag'd to pay due Honour and Acknowledgement to God, and that this Rite was from the Beginning, the Sacrament of Baptism.

C H A P. IV.

Wherein the Third Particular of the Grounds of Infant Baptism is demonstrated.

THE third Particular which I propos'd to insist upon in order to show the Foundation on which the Practice of baptising Infants is built, is as follows: That altho' the Parents be admitted into the New Covenant, the Children born of them are not born within that Covenant, but are, as all others, born in a State of Rebellion and Misery. This the Holy Scripture constrains us to believe, in its speaking so generally of the Ill condition which Mankind are born in, and in that it exempts none from it. It teaches us this in saying particularly of the Children born of Parents

Parents in Covenant with God, that they are born in Sin and Misery. We find *David* confessing the corrupted and guilty State which he was born in, tho' he was born of Parents, admitted into the New Covenant, as that was certainly afforded or dispensed to the Jewish Church. *Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*, says he, *Psal.* 51. 5. This is that which *St. Paul* means when he says, *All are not Israel, that are of Israel, nor because they are the seed of Abraham are they all Children*, that is of God, *Rom.* 9. 6, 7. He proves it to in proving, as he says he does, that *both Jew and Gentile are all under sin*, *Rom.* 3. 9. This is the common State of Nature to all. And it is sufficiently intimated by him again in *Eph.* 2. 3. It may be observ'd he speaks there to those who from being Heathens, and the Worshipers of false Gods, had been converted to Christian Religion. But in this *ad. ver.* by the Word *We*, he puts himself among those who by Nature are Children of Wrath, and intimates himself to have been Originally so, and in his Natural Birth, tho' he was born of the Jewish Nation, and of Parents, who according to the Law or Constitution of those times were in Covenant with God. And we have this plainly and fully express'd in those Words of our Saviour to *Nicodemus*, *Joh.* 3. 3. *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Which is as much as to say, by the meer Natural Birth none can be in Covenant with God, because without a new Birth all are in a State of Rebellion and out of Favour. To proceed according to the Flesh from Holy Persons, or those in Covenant cannot give right to the Promises, but only the Spiritual Regeneration, which Infants in an ordinary way can receive only by Baptism now; what they receive from Father and Mother, who are believers rendring them only Children of *Adam*, and Subjects of that Condemnation under which *Adam* engag'd all his Posterity. Which made *St. Augustine* say, *Quare de Christianis*, &c.

&c. Why of Christians is not a Man born a Christian but because 'tis not Generation, but Regeneration that makes a Christian. (*De peccat. merit. & Remif.* 3. c. 9. in *Arnauld Renversement de la morale de Jesus Christ par les Erreurs des Calvinistes* p. 531.) The Priviledges attending the being in Covenant with God do not come by Birth of Christian Parents, nor any Priviledge farther then Baptism : Birthright entitles to that, and that admits to the rest of the Priviledges. He that was Uncircumcised was cut off tho' he came of a Circumcised Father, *Gen.* 17. 14. Thus speaks a Learned Man of our own (*Lightfoot Serm. at St. Maries Cambr. vol. 2. p. 1128.*) And this is the Doctrine of our Church of *England*, which says of our Children they are not *born* but *made* the Members of Christ, and that in Baptism ; And that *being by nature born in sin and children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.*

As this is undoubtedly the Doctrine of Holy Scripture, so the reason of it is plain and evident, which is this. The New Covenant was not made with *Adam* but with Christ the Mediator for Mankind, as it was granted for his sake. It did not suit the Honour of God, nor the guilty Rebellious State of Man, that God should propose to him a new Covenant, who had broke the first, or establish with him a Method of Salvation from the Misery he had guiltily thrown himself into. It was however agreeable with the Nature of things, altogether, that the Great God should allow a Mediation on the behalf of fallen and lost Man, that he should accept of so worthy a Mediatour as the Son of God, that he should upon his Application grant a Method of Favour, a Law of Happiness, or a Covenant with Mankind to be propos'd again : And that he should constitute him the head of it, especially since he would undertake to fullfil the Conditions of it in the Humane Nature, and that he should have power to bring Men again into a Covenant-state, or as the A

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postle says, give them Power or Priviledge to become the Sons of God. But then this Priviledge must be deriv'd from him not from *Adam*, it must be obtain'd by a new Birth, not by our first or natural Birth, and we must by some appointed way be translated from the first *Adam* to the second: And therefore by our Natural Birth we are only of one Body with *Adam*, but by our Translation we become of one Body with Christ. I must needs think they do not understand the Scriptures, nor the Sate of the New Covenant, who say, the Children of Christian Parents are Church-members by their Birth; and they seem to contradict themselves too, when notwithstanding this they speak of Baptism as an initiating Ordinance; as if it were to enter Infants into that State which they are entred into, according to them, without it.

It is easy to see this Doctrine is not contradicted by that which God says to *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 7. *I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.* For if the other part of the Chapter be observ'd, it will appear this is but conditionally said, and the Condition of it was, that they should enter into that Covenant by the appointed Sacrament, and they should keep the Covenant or perform the Conditions which should be requir'd on their part. In 9. ver. he says, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their Generations.* He would be the God of his Seed, if they would keep his Covenant. And this Covenant was to be entred into by Circumcision, and then observ'd. *This is my Covenant*, says he, 10. ver. *which ye shall keep: Every manchild among you shall be circumcised.* And that he would not be a God to them, nor reckon them in Covenant with him, unless they were Circumcised, which he calls in 11. ver. the *token* of this Covenant, appears by what is said in 14. ver. *The uncircumcised manchild among you, whose flesh of his foreskin*

is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: He should not be reckon'd among the People of God, which is the same thing as to say, he is not to be reckon'd in Covenant with God, or in a State of Subjection and Favour, tho' he were born among you, or of a Circumcised Father.

Neither is this contradicted by the State of the Jewish Females; who must be reckon'd included under those Expressions in Scripture, which speak of all Mankind as born under Sin and Wrath. And if they were born in the same common Condition with the Males, they were born out of Covenant as well as they. And we can see no reason to believe they were included in Covenant with the Circumcised Males any more than the Male Infants were in Covenant by their Circumcised Fathers. 'Tis true, the Females are plainly enough reckon'd among the People of God, and so must be reckon'd to be in Covenant with God, but can we with any Reason think they were born so if the Males were not. As then the Males after the Institution of Circumcision must needs be admitted into Covenant, by that we must believe there was some way of admitting the Females too. And as the Modern Jews tell us, this was done by Baptism, so I think I have in the foregoing Chapter made it appear that we have Ground to believe them in this Matter.

Neither is this Doctrine contradicted by what is said in *Acts* 2. 39. The Promise is unto you, and to your Children. For as we cannot conclude from thence, that Adult Persons have no need of Faith or Baptism, or any other means appointed by God to make them Partakers of the Covenant-Mercies, or the Promise, neither can we any more conclude from thence, that Infants, to partake of the same, have no need to be Regenerated by Baptism.

And tho' this be true, yet there is a great difference between the Condition of those Children, who are born of Christian, or Baptiz'd Parents, and that of those

those who are born of others, as will appear by the following Proposition to be made good in the next Chapter : Which asserts a Right deriv'd to Infants from their Parents of having the same means of Admission applied to them, by which their Parents were entred into Covenant with God, and God's Order and Allowance of their Admission by the same ; which Right does not belong to the Children born of Parents out of Covenant. Those that are in Covenant may derive a Right to Infants to be admitted into Covenant, but none else can do it. Which things we shall see are very distinctly and clearly taught us by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 7. 14. when we come to show that he does in that Text justify the Baptizing of Infants.

C H A P. V.

Wherein the Fourth Particular of the Grounds of Infant-Baptism is stated and prov'd.

THE fourth Particular of the General Scheme laid down at the beginning, which I propos'd to insist upon was this. From the time that we do evidently and certainly find a Ceremony or Sacrament appointed to admit Mankind into Covenant with God again, we find the same allow'd and order'd to be administred to the Children of those Parents, who had been admitted by it. This is so evident by the Account we have in the 17th of *Genesis*, of the first Institution of Circumcision, as we find it interpreted and explain'd, especially in the New Testament, that it puts the Adversaries of Infant Baptism extreamly to their Shifts, to evade the Argument which this affords us for it ; and with all their Endeavour they are not able to do this : But this one thing, if there were nothing else in Scripture to the Purpose, is sufficient to prove their Errour most unreasonable and absurd.

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Yet on the side of the poor Ignorant People of the Party, among whom I may include the greatest part of their Teachers, as well as Hearers, and to excuse them as far as this will go, it must be said: That those who take upon them to defend their Errour do here amuse these Wretches commonly with long and intricate Discourses on the Covenant with *Abraham*, and the Law of *Moses*, and with bringing out all that *St. Paul* says for the laying aside the Burden and Yoke of the *Jewish* Ceremonies, tho' nothing at all to the Purpose; and in the Title or Conclusion of the Discourse, they say the Argument is answer'd, and these believe them, and so the Delusion continues among them. I shall therefore I hope state this matter of Circumcision so plainly, and so evidently prove what I say from the Holy Scripture, that if these poor People will but fairly consider it, they shall be no longer thus deceiv'd.

It has been said, that this Favour is afforded the wretched Posterity of *Adam* by the New Method and Law of Happiness, or the New Covenant, which the Mediator has obtain'd for us, that if the Parent be in Covenant by Christ, his Children, tho' they are not born in Covenant, yet derive from him a right to be admitted or entred into Covenant, and are allow'd by God to be brought into it, and so to a Communion with Jesus Christ by the same Sacrament or means of Admission whereby their Parents were admitted. This appears evidently in the Institution of Circumcision: And if Circumcision was a Rite of entring into Covenant with God, if it did engage Men to obey and acknowledge him according to the Discoveries of himself and his Will, if it did admit Men to the Benefits and Advantages purchas'd for Mankind by Jesus Christ, or to the Favours of the New Covenant, the Method of Salvation by him, and if the Circumcision of the Parent gave the Child a Right to be Circumcised, then by this it will appear, that in this Matter I have given a right State of the New Covenant; I shall then under-
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take to make good these four Things, mention'd, distinctly.

(1.) In the first Place, let us see what Ground the Holy Scripture gives us to say, that the taking of Circumcision was an entring into Covenant with God; This was a Rite or Sacrament of Admission into Covenant. We have a great deal of Proof of this in *Gen.* 17. where the first Institution of this Rite is related. In *ver.* 2. God says to *Abraham*, *I will make my covenant between me and thee*: In *ver.* 7. *I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations*: In *ver.* 10. *This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised*: In *ver.* 11. *And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you*. In *ver.* 13. and 14. speaking of Circumcision, he says, *My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people, he hath broken my covenant*. It may be observ'd here, that the Word Covenant is applied to Circumcision sometimes, which we must understand to be according to an usual way of expressing in the Books of *Moses*, where we may often find a *Law* of God, call'd his *Covenant*: And then Circumcision is call'd so, as it was a Law and Establishment of God. For it was appointed as a Rite and Ceremony, by which all the Males of *Abraham's* Family, both now and in the Ages to come, were to be entred into Covenant. And therefore 'tis also call'd a Token of the Covenant; And 'tis said every Man-child that was not circumcised should be cut off from his People, he should be reckon'd not one of the People of God, not in Covenant with him; because he had broken his Covenant, that is, had slighted the Law and Rule, by which he was to have been admitted to it. After the Institution of this Sacrament God would account even the Na-

tural descendants of *Abraham* as Strangers from the Covenant, if they neglected to be Circumcised. From that time every Male of his Family that was not Circumcised was reckon'd not in Covenant.

'Tis true *Abraham* himself was in favour with God, and so was in Covenant with him before the Institution of Circumcision, and was entred into Covenant, it is probable, by Baptism, but now he must, to keep in Covenant, as we may say, be Circumcised: And to all his Family and Posterity it was necessary from hence-forth, to the Males, that they should be Circumcised to enter them into this Happy State, the being in Covenant with God: If Baptism was used before for this, and was sufficient to it, yet that was not to be sufficient hereafter to them, who were commanded to be Circumcised. And there were many Good Men yet remaining in *Abraham's* time, who were acceptable Worshipers of the true God, according to true Religion, as we may judge by what is said of *Melchisedek*, King of *Salem*, and of *Lot*, and of *Abimelech*, King of *Gerar*. And these being in Covenant before, being entred and engag'd as we may believe by Baptism, they remain'd so still, tho' they were not Circumcised, because this was not requir'd of them. But when these Men went off, and their Posterity corrupted Religion, and the true Religion came to be kept up in its due Purity, only among the Circumcised People; then this Rite came to be requir'd of all that would enter into Covenant with God and be joyn'd to his Church, which consisted only of those whose Males were Circumcised. It was not allow'd to any to come from a false and corrupt Religion to the true one, and so to become one People with those whose Males were Circumcised; but if it was a Male, He and all his Males must be Circumcised. This the Apostle *Paul* sufficiently intimates, in saying of the Uncircumcised Nations, that while they were so, they were strangers from the covenant of promise, Eph. 2. 11, 12.

To such he says there, *ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are call'd uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made with hands: At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* Which speaks Circumcision of Males to have come in time, as the World fell off from the true Religion, to be requir'd of all to their Admission into Covenant with God.

(2.) I proceed now to the second Thing I am to prove, which is, that Circumcision did engage those who took it, to obey and acknowledge God according to the Discoveries of Himself and his Will. This indeed it must do if it entred Men into the New Covenant, the Method of attaining Salvation by Christ; and this it did. The Condition engag'd to be perform'd on their Part, who took Circumcision, was a faithful Obedience, or which is all one, It was Faith which works by Love. I shall distinctly show that Faith in God and Obedience to him, were the Conditions requir'd on Mans part in the Covenant which was made by Circumcision, and that will sufficiently prove that they who took Circumcision did engage to these.

Faith in God was requir'd of those that took Circumcision as the Condition of their receiving the Favours engag'd on his part of the Covenant: This the Spirit of God himself teaches us in the New Testament, from whence without doubt we may derive the best and surest Interpretations of the old one. The Apostle Paul teaches us this in *Rom. 4. 11.* where he says of Abraham, *He receiv'd the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith.* This Text tells us, that Circumcision when it was first instituted became, and so was design'd to be a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith. It was appointed for a seal or assurance of Righteousness to them who should believe in God. Then it was such, but to them who should believe in God:

Then Faith in God was the requir'd Condition of Justification or Pardon of Sin, even under the Covenant which was made with God in the taking Circumcision. But the same Apostle speaks this Matter yet more plainly and fully in the 3^d Chapter of that Epistle. He says in the 9th ver. he had prov'd before *of both Jews and Gentiles that they were all under sin*, and he goes on to produce some Texts of the old Testament which declare this, and concludes from thence in *ver. 19.* that *all the world are become guilty before God.* Then he proceeds to say of all, both Jews and Gentiles, for he is still speaking of both, how it is determin'd, that all must come to be Righteous before God. And he says in *ver. 22.* that *without difference the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ is afforded to all them that believe.* Again, in *ver. 23.* *All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God;* and in *ver. 24. 25.* *They are justified freely by his grace, both Jew and Gentile are so, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,* and in *ver. 30.* *It is one God who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.* Here is a very distinct Manifestation and Proof that the New Covenant was administred to the Jews; that they were made Partakers of this Benefit of it, the Pardon of Sin or Justification, and that the Condition requir'd on their Part was Faith; and this shows it was engag'd in the taking of Circumcision, in which they entred into Covenant with God, were entitl'd to the Mercies of the New Covenant, which is the common Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ, as will appear when I come to show that it did admit them to the Favours of that.

I must take notice of an Objection against this and answer it, tho' it be a very foolish one; because whatever is propos'd as an Argument or Objection by the Defenders of the Error is taken for good by their credulous Followers, especially if it be not particularly answer'd.

'Tis

'Tis said ; " If Circumcision had been a Seal of the
 " Righteousness of Faith, then an Account of the Right-
 " teousness of Faith should have been requir'd of those
 " of Years to whom it was administred : But that
 " such Faith was requir'd or found in all, we read not.
 " *Abraham* the same Day Circumcised All, whether
 " born in his House, or bought with his Mony, with-
 " out any such Declaration or Demand that we read
 " of; and *Ismael*, who was thirteen Years old, and judg'd
 " not within the Covenant of Grace, was also Circum-
 " cised. Of the *Sichemites* also there was requir'd no
 " Profession of Faith to their Circumcision, which, as
 " a form at least, would have been requir'd if it had
 " been judg'd necessary to that Seal, and used by con-
 " verted Profelytes.

In answer to this Objection it may be said :

When we find that the Spirit of God has expressly said by his Apostle, that Circumcision was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, that is, an Assurance of Pardon, and Favour with God, to them that believe; this evidently shows that it did confer the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, and that Faith was then the Condition of the Covenant of Grace ; And then it can be no good Reason to deny or question this, because it is not said that a Profession of Faith was requir'd of some, who are said to have been Circumcised. It is certainly more just to conclude, because of what the Apostle expressly says, that a Profession or Engagement of Faith was requir'd of those grown Persons when they were Circumcised, tho' it be not said that it was. Can they who pretend to be guided by express Scripture, and only by that, think fit to gather from the Scriptures not saying a thing, that which is a Contradiction to what it does expressly say ? Certainly if they do so, they contradict their Pretence. To show how various and uncertain these People are in their interpreting Scripture, I shall observe, that the Family of *Lydia* are said to have been Baptised, but it is not

said that any of it but her self believ'd : And St. *Paul* says he Baptized the Household of *Stephanus*, tho' it is not said that any of them believ'd, and yet for all this they will not allow that any may be baptized, but upon Profession of their Faith ; Why may it not be concluded hence, that some were baptized without Faith, as reasonably as these People would conclude from the Instances mention'd, that some were Circumcised without Faith. We find indeed a Profession of Faith in other Places requir'd of those grown Persons that offer'd themselves to be baptiz'd. And we find too, that the Apostle says, Faith was the Condition of the Covenant entred into in Circumcision, and then this must be concluded requir'd of grown Persons in that as well as in Baptism. Is not this Self-contradiction, and destroying of their own Principles and Arguments, a certain and plain Mark of Error ?

Further ; We have reason certainly from the Apostle's Words to conclude that Faith was the requir'd Condition of that Covenant, which was entred into in Circumcision ; and then we have reason to believe that *Abraham* had instructed the grown Persons in his Family concerning the Faith, that was requisite in that Covenant, and they profess'd it, tho' it be not said they did. This Religious Man we must believe had a Religious Family : It is not said there were any Idolaters in it, therefore we need not believe there were ; they were all then, before the Institution of Circumcision, engag'd in the true Religion, and entred into Covenant with God, perhaps by Baptism, as well as *Abraham* himself. They then had Faith in God, and did profess it before they were Circumcised : and then their Circumcision was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith to them, as well as to *Abraham* himself. Besides, tho' it be said that *Abraham* himself, and all the Males of his Family were on the self-same day Circumcised, yet it is not said, nor necessary to be believed, that this Circumcision was commanded, and also perform'd on the

the self-same day : There might be such a space of Time between, as was necessary to instruct any of his Family, and to induce and to fit them to be Circumcised.

As for the *Sichemites*, It appears they reckon'd upon it to become one People with the Children of *Israel* upon their taking of Circumcision ; and therefore we may believe that it was propos'd to them to live in other Respects after their manner, and to acknowledge the true God only, and Worship him as they did. And if the Design of this Revenge was conceiv'd before the Proposal of Circumcision, the Sons of *Jacob* might make a pretence to Religion in the thing, the better to conceal it : Or it is no wonder if they who had such a design should neglect to propose their Religion to these People, while they sought only an Advantage to execute their design. But perhaps the design was never conceiv'd in any of the Sons of *Jacob*, but those two, who, with the help of their Servants perhaps, did execute it. These were the Brethren of *Dinah* 'tis said, and we find them charg'd with the thing and none else. The Proposal of the thing seems to have been made by the Sons of *Jacob* in a Body ; and tho' 'tis said they answer'd *Hamor* deceitfully in the proposing of Circumcision, this might be because they thought he and his People would not submit to be Circumcised, and they having no mind to marry their Sister among them, but being unwilling to show it, propos'd this Condition which they thought would not be comply'd with. And after all, perhaps this revenge was a sudden thought in the Angry Brethren of *Dinah* suggested by the Advantage which they had to execute it by reason of the foreness of the *Sichemites*, and as suddenly executed. And then there might have been a Proposal of their Religion together with that of Circumcision. Certainly the Circumstances of the matter do not conclude there was no such thing.

Further ; It must be said that Circumcision seal'd the Covenant of Grace to *Ismael*, and the Servants in *Abraham's* Family, or it seal'd nothing. None of them or their Posterity were to inherit the Land of *Canaan*; Nor was it to be of them that the Christ was to come: And in general it may be said, that none of those things were seal'd or assured to them by Circumcision which these People would have to be the only things assur'd by it, that they might exclude the Covenant of Grace from being concern'd in it. Notwithstanding all their Endeavours then to prove that Men did not enter into that Covenant by Circumcision ; we must believe that, and the Favours of that were seal'd to these People, or none at all. And then Faith was a Condition requir'd in the Covenant of Circumcision.

I proceed then in order to demonstrate that this was the New Covenant to show, that as Faith in God was engag'd and undertaken in Circumcision, so was also Obedience to God. He evidently requir'd this of *Abraham*. He says to him, *Walk before me and be thou perfect, and I will make my covenant with thee* ; Which is as much as to say, do thus, that I may make my Covenant with thee. It was to establish this as the Condition to be perform'd on *Abraham's* part. *Abraham* must engage to this to enter into Covenant with God, and he must actually perform it to keep in Covenant, and to have a Right and Claim to the Mercies and Favours of the Covenant. And in these Words there can be meant no less than a faithful Obedience, that *Abraham* should obey God, and trust in him. And this was not requir'd of him alone, we may be sure, but also, of all those that entred into this Covenant : So that Circumcision brought them into a State of Subjection to God, who were not in such a State before, and actually devoted them to serve and honour God according as he should be pleas'd to prescribe to them.

This Condition of the Covenant we find in after-times requir'd of the Circumcised People, *Deut.* 10. 12,

13. where

13. where 'tis very fully and distinctly express'd. *And now Israel (says Moses to them) what doth the Lord thy God require of thee. But to fear the Lord, and to walk in his ways, and to love him; and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul: To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes which I command thee this day for thy good.* And after he had mention'd some Enforcements of this Exhortation, he adds, *ver. 16. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your hearts and be no more stiff-necked;* That is, Mortify those wicked Lusts, and evil Dispositions which have made you Refractory to the Commands of God, and loth to obey his Will and Laws. And in bidding them mortify these under the Phrase of Circumcising the foreskin of their Hearts, he intimates that this was what they engag'd and bound themselves to in their taking of Circumcision, and so that Obedience to the Commands of God was a Condition of that Covenant, and what they engag'd.

Further; We find the Apostle *Paul* giving this Account of what was requir'd on Mans part in this Covenant. Who being an *Hebrew of Hebrews*, as he calls himself, and well acquainted by his Education with the Religion of the Jews, and besides that was instructed by the Spirit of God in a peculiar manner, must needs be allow'd to understand perfectly the Nature of that Covenant which he was entred into in Circumcision. And he says, *Gal. 3. 3. Every man that is circumcised is a debtor to do the whole law.* He is a Debtor to this as Circumcised, because he engag'd to this in taking of Circumcision. And thus we see that in taking of Circumcision all Persons came under Engagement to perform what is requir'd on Mans part in the Covenant of Grace; that is, to honour, obey and acknowledge God.

(3.) The third thing I am to demonstrate concerning the Sacrament of Circumcision is, that it did admit Men to the Benefits and Advantages purchas'd for Mankind by Jesus Christ, or to the Favours of the New Covenant, the Method of Salvation by him. The
main

main Business of this Covenant made with the Family of *Abraham*, and entred into by Circumcision, was to bring Men to Happiness by the Mediation and Merits of Jesus Christ. Whatever else it serv'd for was but Typical or a Representation of this main Design and End. It was a Dispensation very much cloath'd with outward Things, as we may speak, both with respect to what was requir'd on Mans part, and what was promised on Gods; But yet it did not consist only of Externals, the Spiritual Matters which the New Covenant contains, as it is a Method of Salvation or a Law of Happiness, were all included in it, and were chiefly intended by it.

This may be made good in *General* by those Scriptures which speak of Circumcision, as that which did put Men into a State of Favour with God, and entituled them to Salvation by Jesus Christ: And also particularly by those Texts of Scripture, which tell us, that the Benefits purchas'd by Jesus Christ for the Salvation of Mankind were exhibited and afforded to those that were Circumcised; they came therein to have a Right and Title to them, or to be possess'd of them. I shall produce some of the Proofs of both sorts, because it will be of great Use, I think, towards the informing and convincing these Mistaken People, to make this Matter evident and clear.

That it was intended in the first Institution of Circumcision that Men should thereby enter into a State of Favour with God, and of Salvation by Jesus Christ, appears in general in the Promise made on God's part, which is spoken thus, *Gen. 17. 7. I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, to be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee.* Now the utmost that Salvation can include, all that can be expected or obtain'd by Jesus Christ, is contain'd in that large and comprehensive Expression, *I will be a God to thee and thy seed.*

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There is an evident Intimation of this, That Circumcision brought Men into a state of Salvation by Christ; or, that this was the Favour promised on God's part in that Covenant in *Acts 15. 11*. Where the Apostle says, *We believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they*. These Words are part of a Discourse made by the Apostle Peter, upon the Question which was risen in the Church: Whether or no those that were converted to Christianity, from among the Heathen Nations, must needs be Circumcised, to their partaking of Salvation by Jesus Christ? By the word *We*, he means the Christian Church, consisting both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; reckoning himself (tho' a Jew by Birth) of one and the same Body with those who were Converted to Christianity from among the *Gentiles*. And we must reckon, that he speaks these Words with Relation to these Persons, because his whole Discourse is of them, and of what was necessary to their Salvation. Of these he says, then, that they should be sav'd by the Lord Jesus Christ: The Converted *Gentiles* should be sav'd by the Lord Jesus Christ as well as they; that is, as well as the Fathers mention'd in the 10th Verse; by whom he means those of the Jewish Church in former times, who had been Circumcised: So that he does therein plainly intimate, that those Fathers had been sav'd through the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, in the method of the New Covenant, in which then they must have been entred in their Engagement to God, in taking Circumcision.

Again, to convince us of this, the Apostle *Paul* tells us, the Gospel was preached to *Abraham*, which is the Law or Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ; and it was preached to him, he says, in these Words: *In thee shall all Nations be blessed, Gal. 3. 8*. This was a Promise, that the Christ, the Saviour of the World, should come of his Posterity. And so it was a Promise of Salvation to *Abraham* and his Seed by Jesus Christ,

Christ, to the Nation of the *Jews* as well as to others; for they must be reckon'd in the number of all Nations, the Word includes both *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And he says further in the 17th Verse of that Chapter; *That the Covenant made with Abraham was a Covenant confirm'd of God in Christ*; which signifies, that the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ procured the Favours of that Covenant, and Men were thereby brought to a Communion with him, or a state of Salvation by him. For this Reason it is that the Apostle says those things of the Uncircumcised Nations, which we have observed in *Ephes. 2. 12*; where, he says, that they were *without Christ*. Being without Circumcision, they were without Christ, and *without Hope*; that is without hope of Salvation by him. There were no necessary Connexion in these two things, nor had the Apostle spoke thus, unless it were so, that the Ceremony and Rite of Circumcision was appointed of God, to bring men into an Union and Participation with Jesus Christ; and to a state of Salvation by him. Thus I think it is sufficiently prov'd in general, That the Covenant made in Circumcision, did offer and afford Salvation by Jesus Christ. And if Jesus Christ was the Saviour of the World before his coming as well as since, If the good People of the Jewish Church were saved by him, as well as the Christian Church, and Circumcision was a Rite and Ceremony to bring Men into a state of Salvation by him, then it must be granted, that this did enter Men into the New Covenant, the Covenant of Grace.

But if this matter be not sufficiently clear'd by these general Intimations of Scripture, we shall abundantly confirm it by those Scriptures, which tell us, That the particular Benefits purchased by Jesus Christ, in order to the final Salvation of Men, were exhibited and afforded in and by the Sacrament of Circumcision, and the Covenant which Men entred into therein; which will prove it underiably to have been the New

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Covenant, or the Covenant of Grace. There are several Texts of Scripture which tell us of Justification, and Sanctification, and of a Right to Eternal Life, as Bestow'd and Conferr'd in this Covenant.

In the first place, the Persons Circumcis'd were therein admitted into a state of Favour with God, and had the benefit of Justification. This was promis'd on God's part, at the time of his Instituting it; when he said to *Abraham*, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* This certainly speaks Justification, and a state of *Favour*, and this they were to obtain by the Covenant of Circumcision, but not without it after the Institution of Circumcision. Again, The Apostle calls this Sacrament a *Seal of Righteousness*, Rom. 4. 11. It assur'd then to the Person Circumcis'd, the Remission of his Sins, and his Justification before God: And this Justification he received by vertue of the Death of Christ; therefore the Apostle says of the *Jews*, that they having sinned and come short of the Glory of God, were *Justified freely by his Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 3. 23. 24. This is one Benefit of the Covenant of Grace, which we see was granted the Circumcised People, and sealed by their Circumcision.

Another Benefit bestow'd on God's part in the Covenant of Circumcision, was Sanctification or the Renewing of the Holy Ghost. Upon this ground it is, that the Scripture speaks of inward as well as outward Circumcision. The inward Circumcision is the cutting off, or putting away the evil Lusts and Dispositions of corrupted Nature: and without doubt, 'tis spoke of under the Name of Circumcision, as being a Blessing and Favour of the Covenant of Circumcision. The outward Circumcision which was of the Flesh, did by God's Order and Appointment give the Circumcised Person a Right to the inward and spiritual Circumcision of the Heart, and an actual possession of it, according to the Capacity of the Subject. Therefore

Moses

Moses speaking from God of the efficacy which their Circumcision should have upon the People of *Israel*, says *Deut. 30. 6.* *The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, that thou mayest live.* This is certainly to put a new and holy Principle into a Man, when he is made to love God with all his Heart. To the same purpose, the Apostle speaks of Circumcision in *Rom. 2. 28, 29.* where he says, *He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the Flesh: But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the Heart:* Which is as much as to say, this Rite and Sacrament was intended to confer and bestow an inward Sanctification to those that receiv'd it, where it had its full and designed effect, it did this, and then these Persons were truly Circumcised.

Thirdly, In and by Circumcision, was assur'd, from the Covenant seal'd by it, a Right and Title to Everlasting Happiness. To make this good, we may observe the Apostle says to Christians, That being Christ's, they were *Abraham's* Seed and Heirs according to the Promise; they were Heirs of that which was promised to *Abraham*, or had Right to it. And then since it cannot be understood, that Christians do become Heirs of the Land of *Canaan*, which was the Inheritance promised to *Abraham* and his Seed; it must needs be, that the Apostle means here the Promise of Eternal Life: And then *Abraham* had the Promise of Eternal Life, and his Seed, and all that were in the Covenant of Circumcision, by vertue of that Covenant, were Heirs of this; and the Land of *Canaan* was a Type of that Felicity. The Scripture teaches us, that the Land of *Canaan* was a Type and Representation of Heaven in many places; but I shall content my self to shew, That the pious Persons who first receiv'd the Sacrament of Circumcision understood it to be so. This the Apostle evidently intimates

mates in saying of them, *Heb. 11. 13. They confess'd that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth*: As they were such in the Land of *Canaan* before they possess'd it as their own. They own'd and understood that this their sojourning State in the Land of *Canaan* at first was a Signification that their Life on Earth was but a sojourning State, and they were but as Strangers in this World; Such who had their proper Home and Country elsewhere, in another and a better World. And he says expressly in *ver. 16.* that *they desir'd a better country, even an heavenly one.* They sought and had a Title conferr'd to them in Circumcision to the Happiness of Heaven. They whom he thus commends in this Chapter did not seek by this entring into Covenant with God, any thing but what he allow'd them to seek, and what they understood he allow'd them to seek, and what was conferr'd upon them, and made sure to them, in, and by this Ordinance. As the Possession then of the Land of *Canaan* was a Favour promised to the Circumcised People, as part of the good Things promised them on God's part of the Covenant which he made with them in Circumcision, so the obtaining of the Happiness of Heaven at last was included too, and was understood and sought by them, and assur'd to them. This indeed was included in that General Promise to *Abraham, I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee.* *Abraham* and his Seed too knew that this engaged God's peculiar Favour to them, and that they should be made happy by it so long as they should be: So that if they had any Knowledge of a future State they might expect the Favour of God would make them happy in that State. And our Saviour himself certainly teaches us they had under that Dispensation the Knowledge of a future State, *Mat. 22. 29.* and following Verses, and that there was an evident Reference to it in those Words of God to *Moses, Exod. 3. 6. I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;* because as he says, *ver. 32.*

God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Intimating that God would not have call'd himself the God of these Men now that they were dead, unless they had still a Being: God would not say, I am the God of any that are not, but he always says it of those that are. In this Expression our Saviour says, is signified the Being and Existence of those Men after their Life on Earth was done, and then he allows us to conclude, that in this Promise of being a God to them was included that they should partake of his Favour in another World.

Thus I think it appears that the New Covenant, or the Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ was offer'd or propos'd to the Jews, this was the main and chief Concern of the Covenant which they entred into in Circumcision, and it was dispensed to them therein. They engag'd to what is requir'd of Mankind in this New Covenant, and they obtain'd a Right to what is promised on God's part, to Salvation by Jesus Christ and all the steps and degrees of that.

(4.) These things being prov'd, it remains in the fourth Place to be also prov'd that the Circumcision of the Parent gave his Child a Right to be Circumcised too, and then it will appear undeniably, that from the time when we do evidently and certainly find a Ceremony or Sacrament appointed to admit Mankind into Covenant with God again, we find the same allow'd and order'd to be Administred to the Children of those Parents, who had been admitted by it. And this will be very easily prov'd from that, *Gen. 17.* where the Administration of this Sacrament to Infants is expressly commanded in *ver. 10.* God says to *Abraham* concerning his Family, *Every man-child among you shall be circumcised.* In *ver. 12.* *He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you.* And it is added; *He that is born in the house or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed: He that is born in thine house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised.* Which Orders

Orders those Infants, who were at the disposal of the Circumcised People, as much as if they were their own Natural Off-spring to be Circumcised, as well as the other. And this order and command of God establish'd a Right in those Children to be Circumcised, to be entred into Covenant with him by that Sacrament. God's command of Circumcising the Infants of those who were themselves circumcised, appointed and allow'd the admitting their Infants into Covenant with him and the bringing both Parents and Children into this by the same Sacrament and Rite of Admission.

C H A P. VI.

Wherein the last Particular of the Grounds of Infant Baptism is demonstrated from the Holy Scripture.

THE fifth and last Particular in the Foundation of Infant-Baptism, which has been laid down, comes now to be demonstrated from the Holy Scripture, and that is ; That Baptism is now by our Lord's Institution the Sacrament and Rite of our Admission into Covenant with God, or a State of Salvation by Jesus Christ, this brings us into the New Covenant. That it does so must be acknowledged, if it does engage us to obey and honour God, and if it brings us to a Right to the Blessings and Favours of the New Covenant : These two things therefore I shall undertake to make appear from the Account which the Holy Scripture gives us of this Sacrament.

First, I shall make it appear, that the Sacrament of Baptism is a solemn Form and Ceremony of our Engagement in Covenant with God. It engages us to honour and acknowledge him according to the Rules and Laws of Christian Religion.

We have a Proof of this in the Form of Baptising appointed by our Saviour : which is to be administered

in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For he that is Baptised in this Form is therein devoted to the Holy Trinity, and takes upon him an Engagement to obey and honour God, as shall be requir'd of him. He engages to receive as Truth and to learn as Doctrine what shall be taught him by the Adorable Trinity; And to obey what shall be requir'd of him as the Law of God.

This is shown too in that we find Repentance and Faith requir'd in the New Testament as Conditions of obtaining the Favours of the Covenant of Grace. For if these are the Conditions of obtaining them they must be undertaken and engag'd in our entring into that Covenant. It is certain that a Covenant supposes a mutual Engagement between the Parties in Covenant: And then they do not come into Covenant till both take upon them their respective Engagements. Therefore we do not enter into Covenant with God, till we take upon us an Engagement to perform the Conditions requir'd on our part of the Covenant: But these things we must conclude are the Conditions requir'd on our part of the Covenant, if we find them requir'd as Conditions of our obtaining the Blessings and Favours promis'd on God's part. And we cannot chuse but see this in the New Testament, that Faith and Repentance are thus requir'd; I shall content my self therefore to produce but one Text for each of them to prove this in *John 3. 16.* we have it intimated concerning Faith. Where 'tis said, *God so lov'd the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.* This is signified concerning Repentance (besides other places) in *Act. 3. 19.* where the Apostle Peter to the Jews, says, *Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.* In these two things, Repentance and Faith, is contain'd all that can be due from us to Almighty God, that Honour and Acknowledgment which Christian Religion requires. To Repent,

pent, is to renounce all the common Causes of Wick-
edness, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to
engage that we will not follow, nor be led by them.
And to believe, is to pay the highest Homage to God
which we are capable of. For 'tis in its true Nature
and Extent, a resigning up our selves entirely to his
Disposal, a resigning our Understandings to receive
what he pleases to deliver to us as Truth, and our
Wills to his Will and Laws, 'tis a devoting our selves
to live to him, and to serve his Honour and Glory.
Since then we find these things requir'd as Conditions
of the Divine Favour, it must be understood, that
when we enter into Covenant with God, which is to
take upon us an Engagement to perform these, we en-
gage our selves to pay him due Honour and Acknow-
ledgement. And then our taking of Baptism brings us
under this Engagement, we must needs believe, if
it brings us to a Right and Title to the Favours on
God's part of the Covenant, for this it cannot do, but
as bringing us under such Engagement, and this I shall
make appear it does presently.

But it is also shown, that such an Engagement is
undertaken in our Baptism, in that we find Repentance
and Faith requir'd in some Persons, who were urg'd,
or were desirous to be Baptised: These could be for
no other Reason requir'd to be in them, but because
the taking of Baptism is design'd to engage us to such
Things. Two Scriptures shall suffice also for proof of
this, that Repentance and Faith have been requir'd of
some in order to their Baptism: For Repentance we
may take notice of that which the Apostle *Peter* says to
the troubled Jews, *Repent, and be baptised for the remis-
sion of your sins*, Act. 2. 38. For Faith, we may observe
what the Evangelist *St. Philip* said to the *Eunuch* upon
his desire to be Baptised. *If thou believest with all thine
heart thou maiest*, Act. 8. 37. From these and the like
Scriptures we learn that they, who are capable of
these things, must actually be possess'd of them at their

coming to Baptism, and that all must engage and be bound to them, and the taking of this Sacrament is an outward show and pretence of coming under such an Engagement, and therefore binds a Man to it.

But there is yet one Text of Scripture I shall produce to this Purpose, which is so full that I shall not need to add any more. It is what St. Peter says concerning Baptism in 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. *Baptism saves us* (says he) *not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.* The Word rendered *Answer* here means *Stipulation* or *Promise*, the *sponsor* or engagement of a good Conscience towards God; which can mean no less than an Engagement to pay him due Honour and Acknowledgement. And then we must observe, the Apostle says, Baptism saves us, not as it is a putting away the Filth of the Flesh; It is not this in Baptism that puts us into a State of Salvation, or gives us Right to the promis'd Favours of the Covenant, but this Engagement of a good Conscience; Baptism brings us into a State of Salvation, as it brings us under such an Engagement. Then the Apostle teaches us herein, that it brings us under such Engagement. We must understand the Apostle does not exclude the outward washing, as having no reference to this Matter, for there could be no Baptism without that, but he means the outward washing does not save us, or bring us into a State of Salvation, alone, or chiefly, but as it is attended with, and chiefly as it is a solemn Form of the engaging to keep a good Conscience towards God. In this way it saves us, that is brings into a State of Salvation, gives us a Right to it, as it enters us into Covenant with God, for this is the only State of Salvation. And it can enter us into Covenant with God, only as it engages us to perform the Conditions of the Covenant, which are the Conditions of obtaining the Favours on God's part.

But it will more fully appear and be prov'd, that the taking of Baptism brings us under such Engagement

ment as hath been mention'd when I shall have prov'd, as I propos'd in the second place to do; That the Sacrament of Baptism according to the Institution of our Lord admits Men to a Right and Title to the Favours of the Covenant of Grace; and this I shall now undertake.

The Doctrine of our Church concerning this Sacrament fully speaks this, in that we are taught by it, that in Baptism we are *made members of Christ, and the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.* And this I shall make appear is the Doctrine of Holy Scripture, it is contain'd therein, and may be prov'd thereby. It is taught us there, and may be confirm'd and prov'd by three sorts of Texts (1.) By such as speak our Being united to Christ by Baptism. (2.) By such as require Baptism in order to our Salvation by Christ, or our partaking of the Favours and Benefits which he has purchas'd for Mankind. (3.) By such as speak the Favours of the New Covenant, as exhibited, and given to us in and by the Sacrament of Baptism.

(1.) Some Texts of Scripture teach and prove this, That the Sacrament of Baptism admits Men to a Right and Title to the Favours of the Covenant of Grace, in giving us an Account that it does unite Men to Christ, and render them as of one Body with him: For, as it has been prov'd, we must be united to him to come to be in Covenant with God, and to have right to the Favours of the Covenant. As by our Union with *Adam* in our Natural Birth, we are born out of Covenant, so by our Union to Christ we are brought into Covenant; And in Baptism we are united to, or made Members of Christ. This is very fully spoken in *Gal. 3. 27.* *As many of you (says the Apostle) as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ.* He expresses that those who had been baptised were baptised into Christ, they were admitted to a sort of Union with him; And that was to this Effect, that they did also therein put on Christ. They had been so united to Christ by their Baptism as to become Members of his Mystical Body,

and to have Communion with him, so as to derive a Communication of the Graces and Favours which he in our Nature as Mediator had purchas'd for Mankind. The same Apostle says elsewhere, both of Jew and Gentile that came into the Christian Church, that they were all *baptised by the spirit into one body*, 1 Cor. 12.13. We cannot understand he should say they had been *baptised* into one Body, but to signify that Baptism had been the means and instrument of their Union, tho' the Spirit were the chief efficient Cause; the Spirit of God had brought them to this State by their Baptism. Those who were perswaded by St. Peter's Discourse to receive Jesus Christ and his Doctrine, in *Acts* 2. and who were thereupon baptised, as we read in *ver.* 41. These are said in that *Verse* to be *added* to the Apostles, who we know were the beginning of the Church of Christ: And in *ver.* 47. of that Chapter, they are said to be *added to the Church*, which Church we have seen the Scripture calls the *body of Christ*. It was by their Baptism then as is plainly intimated that these were added to the Church, or united to Christ.

(2.) Some Texts of Scripture prove that the Sacrament of Baptism is the appointed Rite of entring into the New Covenant, as they speak it necessary to this Purpose: And they show it indispensably necessary, where it may be had, when they tell us, that even the Qualifications which are the Conditions of the Covenant are not sufficient without it; As they do signify those Qualifications are not sufficient alone, when they direct People to add to them the taking of Baptism. Repentance and Faith are the Conditions of the Covenant, but for all this we find those that were Penitent, and those that were Believers directed to undergo this Sacrament that they might have a Right to the Favours of the Covenant. It must needs be thus indeed according to the Constitution of the New Covenant. In which 'tis for the sake of Christ, and only upon the Account of our belonging to him, that
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such things are the Conditions of our recovering and enjoying the Divine Favour, and therefore when an Ordinance is appointed to unite us to him, we cannot be so without the Use of it, where it may be had. It does not agree, we must believe, with the Wisdom of God to appoint any thing for an end which he will ordinarily allow to be attain'd without it, and when it may be had and used for that end.

Let us take notice then of those Texts of Scripture which require the use of this Sacrament to be added to Repentance and Faith. That Repentance alone was not thought sufficient to the Jews by the Apostle *Peter* appears in *Act. 2. 38*. The People that were Witnesses of the Miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles at the Feast of Pentecost, and were by *St. Peter's* Discourse to them, concerning Jesus as the Christ, prick'd at the Heart, and in a great Concern what they should do to be deliver'd from the Wrath of God and the Guilt of their Sins, were without doubt in a very humble and penitent Disposition of Mind at that time. The Apostle, however told them that Repentance was necessary to them, it was that which the State of their Case requir'd. But besides this, he lets them know they must be Baptised too. *Repent and be baptised every one of you, says he, for the remission of sins.* They must carry on their Concern of Mind to a thorough and lasting Repentance, and besides this they must be Baptised for the Remission of their Sins, and also that they might receive the Gift of the *Holy Ghost*. Baptism was an appointed Means for their obtaining of that Gift, by which he means as we shall see hereafter the common sanctifying Gift of the Holy Ghost, which should consecrate them to God. These are two of the Favours of the New Covenant which the Apostle we see directs them that were penitent to be Baptised also, that they might obtain them. Again, in *Act. 22.* the Holy Scripture teaches us the same thing. In that Chapter *St. Paul* had been giving an Account of the

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Miraculous manner of his Conversion to the Christian Faith: And in *ver. 16.* he says, that *Ananias*, who was sent to him to heal him of his Blindness, under which he lay in great Anguish and trouble of Mind, we must believe, for his having persecuted the Followers of Jesus, who had lately appear'd to him in Glory from Heaven, said to him, *Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins.* He directs him to take this Sacrament, that he might receive with it the Pardon of his Sins, or be receiv'd into Favour with God. We cannot doubt but he was very Penitent for the great Sin for which he afterwards calls himself the chiefest of Sinners, but notwithstanding this he must be Baptised to obtain the Remission of his Sins.

As Repentance without Baptism, where it might be had, seems not to have been accounted sufficient to Salvation, so we shall find some Texts of Scripture that intimate as much concerning Faith: For we shall find Baptism requir'd as well as Faith, and we shall find that thought necessary to be added where Faith went before: It is requir'd together with Faith, and both are made necessary to Salvation in *Mark 16. 16.* *He that believes and is baptised shall be saved.* As actual Faith is necessary in grown Persons, who are capable of it, so Baptism is necessary to all in order to Salvation. In another place of Scripture we shall find this thought necessary to be added where Faith went before. This appears in the Account we have of the Baptising the Officer of the Queen of *Ethiopia*, by *St. Philip*, in *Act. 8.* We have no express mention there of any of *St. Philip's* Discourse to him but what tended to convince him that Jesus was the true Christ, and the Saviour of the World. But either *Philip* had taught him the necessity of being Baptised, tho' this be not related, or else he had learnt this while he had been at Jerusalem by the Discourses of some of the Christians, or by observing that Disciples to the Christian Religion were usually admitted by Baptism. And he understood that the Fa-

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yours and Blessings which were to be obtain'd by the Messias were to be convey'd and assur'd by Baptism. This was the reason, that when he was convinced that Jesus was the true Christ, he said, when they came to a certain Water, *See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptised?* This Man did not think it enough for him to believe in Christ, nor the Evangelist neither, therefore the one desir'd and the other administred Baptism to him to admit him into the Church, the Body of Christ, or into the New Covenant.

To these Scriptures already mention'd, I shall add one more which fully speaks the Necessity of Baptism, and that it is the appointed means and Sacrament of our entring into Covenant with God, or coming into a State of Salvation. It is that indeed where we shall see it exprelly appointed by our Saviour for that Purpose. It is *John 3. 3. and ver. 5.* In *ver. 3.* he tells *Nicodemus*, *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Every Man must come under a New and second Birth to be deliver'd from the Guilt and Misery contracted by the first: That is he must be translated from the first *Adam* to the second, from the first Parent of Mankind to Jesus Christ. Then in *ver. 5.* he tells him, how this must be accomplish'd, or brought to pass, and that is, by the Sacrament of Baptism in saying, *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* This place of Scripture is a full proof of what 'tis brought for if the Sacrament of Baptism be here spoken of, as I think I shall undeniably prove when I come to make use of this Scripture to justify the Baptising of Infants. It then fully proves that Baptism is an appointed Rite or Means of our being brought into Covenant with God by Jesus Christ.

3. Another sort of Texts which prove this are such as speak of the Benefits purchas'd for Mankind by Jesus Christ, the Favours of the New Covenant, as conferr'd and bestow'd upon Men, in, and by the Sacraments

ment of Baptism. This cannot be said or intimated in Scripture, but we must needs conclude and see that this Sacrament admits Men into this Covenant. I shall mention some Texts which speak particularly of these Benefits as obtain'd by Baptism, or bestow'd in and with it.

We find Remission of Sin intimated to be bestow'd in Baptism, or to be obtain'd by it, in those Texts which direct Men to be Baptised for the Remission of Sin. Such are those two that have been already produced, the one in the 2^d. the other in the 22^d. Chapter of the *Acts*. They were not mockt or deluded, who were directed to this Sacrament that they might obtain Remission. It was certainly said to the Jews, *be baptised for Remission of your sins, because that Remission might be obtain'd by and with it.* And it was said to Saul, *be baptised and wash away thy Sins, because his guilt would be therein remov'd.* Thus we see this Sacrament is order'd for this, and is the ordinary method and way of coming into a State of Favour with God.

We shall also find that the Sanctifying Gift and Influence of the Holy Spirit is given in, and with this, by Divine Order, and does attend it. As we derive a corrupted polluted Nature from *Adam* by our Natural Birth, that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, so by being Baptised, and therein engrafted into Christ, we derive a Measure of the same Spirit which dwelt in him, and receive of his Fulness, as *St. John* speaks, even Grace for Grace: We become therein Members of Christ, and so are quickened by the same Principle of a Divine Life which dwelt in him. Hence 'tis said, *if a Man be in Christ he is a New Creature.* This change of Nature is said to attend the Sacrament of Baptism, and to be exhibited in and with the Administration or Participation of that. Our Saviour says, *Joh. 3. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the spirit is spirit,* ver. 6. The Natural Birth derives nothing but a corrupted Nature, but the New Birth, which he is there speaking of to *Nicodemus*, derives a
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Spiritual and a Holy Nature. And in the *ver. 5.* of that Chapter he tells him how that Spiritual Birth must be effected, that Baptism is the appointed Means, and the Spirit of God the efficient Cause of it. He says, *Men must be born again of water and of the holy spirit*; he joins Water with the Spirit, as the Means of that Second Birth which is necessary to our entering into the Kingdom of Heaven; which evidently shows, that together with the Application of Water in the use of this Sacrament, the Sanctifying Influences of the Holy Spirit are by Divine Appointment conferr'd. We shall find the same Priviledge again, said to be attending Baptism by the Apostle *Paul*, 1 Cor. 6. He tells the *Corinthians* there concerning several sorts of Sins, that they who should live in them should not inherit the Kingdom of God, they who liv'd in such Sins were certainly in a State of Rebellion, and therefore should not enjoy the Favour and Happiness of due Subjects to God, and then he says, that some of those Converts to Christianity had formerly been such evil Livers. But now, says he to them, in *ver. 11.* *Ye are wash'd, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.* In which Words he distinctly mentions their Baptism, and the Priviledges which were therein conferr'd upon them. They were wash'd, it may be said, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, that is, baptised in his Name; and with this they were justified or received into a State of Favour, and sanctified by the Spirit of God. He says, they had been wash'd, and Justified and Sanctified, to denote when and how, or by what means, and in what way, they had been taken into Covenant with God through Christ, that it was in and by the Sacramental washing which had been administred to them. This matter is further prov'd by the Apostle's Words, *Tit. 3. 5.* where mentioning the *kindness and love of God our Saviour*, he says it prov'd it self in that *according to his mercy he sav'd them* who were converted to Christianity, and

and so brought into Covenant with God, *by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*. Here are certainly two distinct things mention'd by which they are said to be sav'd, the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost: Therefore the washing must be understood to mean the Sacramental washing of Baptism; and it must be call'd the washing of Regeneration to signify that it had been the instrument and means of Spiritual Regeneration; that in, and by, which the renewing of the Holy Ghost had been afforded them, by which they had receiv'd his sanctifying Influences. It could not be the washing of Regeneration, a washing that could exhibit that, but as it did exhibit, and was attended with the sanctifying Influence and Operation of the Holy Spirit. Thus in Baptism we become the Children of God.

Another Favour of the New Covenant is a Right to everlasting Life, and this too the Holy Scripture tells us is conferr'd in Baptism, as our Church says, we do therein become the Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. Man was banish'd from Paradise, as soon as he had sinned, both *Adam* and his Children were so, to signify their Loss of all Right to a Happy Immortality, but by Baptism Men are restor'd to a Right to that Happiness again. There is not now a Terrestrial Paradise that they can be restor'd to, because it is the Punishment of Sin that no such Happiness shall be enjoy'd in this World; But we read of a Paradise elsewhere, a happy Place and State to which Good Souls are remov'd upon their Departure hence, and this they have a Right to now, being devoted to God by Baptism, through Jesus Christ. This is plainly signified in Holy Scripture, whenever it is there ascrib'd to Baptism to save Men. Which is expressly done in two Scriptures that have been already produced. The one is that in *1 Pet. 3. 21.* where the Apostle *Peter* expressly says, Baptism saves us. The other is that in *Tit. 3. 5.* where *St. Paul* says Christians are sav'd by the washing of

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Regeneration, by that washing which bestows Regeneration. To see the more evidently that this Text is a full Proof of what we now use it for, we may observe what the Apostle adds in connexion with it in *ver. 7th.* of that Chapter, he sav'd us (says he) by the washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost in *ver. 5.* *That we should be justified by his grace, and be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life,* in *ver. 7.* These Words tell us that the washing of Regeneration was for this purpose, and to this effect, namely the making Men Heirs of Eternal Life, the giving them a Right to a Happy Immortality. Further ; To receive Christ, and to put on Christ, are Phrases that signify the same thing, and they both signify such an Union or Relation to him, as from whence is deriv'd a Participation in his Righteousness and Merits : And we may remember the Apostle tells us, that in Baptism we are *baptised into Christ and do put on Christ.* (Gal. 3. 27.) We will then observe further, that St. John says, *To as many as received him to them he gave power to become the Sons of God,* Joh. 1. 12. 'tis said also Eph. 1. 5. we come to the *Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ,* which must be by our being in the appointed way united to him. And the same Apostle teaches us to conclude, that if we are come to the Priviledge of being the Children of God then we have a Right and Title to everlasting Life, Rom. 8. 17. *If ye are children (says he) then are ye heirs : Ye are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ;* As he is Son by Nature, we being join'd to him, become Sons of God by Adoption and Grace. And then we are Heirs of God, have a Right as it may be said, to him, who said to *Abraham,* according to the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace ; *I am thy portion and exceeding great reward.* We are Joint-heirs with Christ being united with him in the way, and by the means appointed, we have a Right to that Happiness and Glory to which Jesus Christ himself is advanced, to partake with him

of the same. These things I think have fully prov'd our last particular of the Grounds of Baptising Infants, which was, that the Sacrament of Baptism is now by our Lord's Institution the Sacrament and Right of our Admission into Covenant with God, or a State of Salvation by Jesus Christ.

C H A P. VII.

Wherein are suggested the Arguments for Infant-Baptism which are afforded by the foregoing Discourse.

HAVING now laid down the Grounds which the Holy Scripture affords for the Baptising of Infants; I believe it may appear to any Person that shall consider what has been said without Prejudice against this Practise, that it is sufficiently vindicated therein. And I doubt not but a fair Consideration of these things may, by the Blessing of God, be able to prevent any Person that is not yet involv'd in it from falling into this Error. But this is not all the Work that the Adversary of Peace and Truth has given us to do in this Matter, and there are some possess'd with this Opinion, that our Infants ought not to be Baptised; and such are not so willing as they should be, and therefore are not apt or likely to see of themselves the force of what is said against their Error, and they are besides confounded by the Arts and Cavils of those that make a Gain of seducing them: Therefore it is necessary for their Instruction and Conviction to show them particularly what Arguments these things do afford for the justifying of the Church of God in this Practise: And this I shall now do, and so conclude this part of the Work.

And upon these Grounds which I think have been sufficiently clear'd, and evidently prov'd from Holy Scrip

Scripture, there may be these two Arguments urg'd to justify the Baptising of Infants. (1.) They have need of the Sacrament of Baptism in order to their Salvation by Jesus Christ, therefore they may and ought to be Baptised. (2.) They have God's Allowance to be Baptised, and therefore this Sacrament may and ought to be administred to them. I shall particularly show how these two Arguments result from what has been said.

First, We learn from these Grounds, That our Infants have need of the Sacrament of Baptism in order to their Salvation, and therefore they may, and ought to be Baptised.

This appears by the following Connexion of Truths. Infants have certainly need of a Salvation, as well as others. This has been prov'd to be the Consequent of the Fall of our first Parents, from the State of the Method of Happiness which was establish'd with Mankind in them. By their Sin all their Posterity come to be born in a State of Rebellion and Misery, are under an Enmity against God, and deserve his Wrath and Damnation.

Again ; It is certain that all who are deliver'd from this lost Condition must be set free by Jesus Christ. He is the only Saviour of the World. As we were lost by one, even the first *Adam*, we must be sav'd by him who is the second *Adam*. It is certain the Pollution and Guilt under which we are born cannot be taken away from any of us, but by the Application to us of the Merits and Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Further ; It is certain, that this Application is not universally made ; nor is it ordinarily made but in the Use of ordinary appointed Means. Jesus Christ has taken upon him to represent all Mankind, and his Obedience and Death were paid to God for us all, but a Method and way, agreeable to the Nature of things, is appointed wherein Men must come to be Partakers with him ; And hereby it comes to pass, that all Men

are not saved. According to which it is said in Scripture, *To as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God; And he that believes and is baptised shall be saved; And he is the Saviour of the Body;* and he has *purchas'd the Church with his own blood.* All which expressions do appropriate his Salvation to some among Mankind: And do make it appear that to be sav'd by him, all must be by some way united or incorporated into him.

Further; It appears that to be thus united to him, to be Partakers of his Merits and Righteousness we must be solemnly devoted and engaged to honour, and acknowledge, and obey God according to the Discoveries which he is pleas'd to make to us of himself, and his Will. His Undertaking was never design'd to excuse us from paying what is due to God from our Natural Relations and Obligations to him, and therefore it cannot be supposed that we should ever come into a State of Salvation, without entring into Covenant, and engaging to this: It is therefore signified, that those who were not thus in Covenant with God, were also without Christ, and without Hope, *Eph. 2. 12.* In this way of entring into Covenant with God we come to partake in the Merits and Righteousness of Jesus Christ. The Necessity of coming in this way into the Divine Favour is very evident at the first Institution of Circumcision, as will appear by laying together the 7th and 9th Verses of the 17th Chapter of Gen. In ver. 7. God says to Abraham, *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant to be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.* In ver. 9. He adds, *Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations.* The Conditions of God's Favour must be perform'd, when we are capable, that we may obtain his Favour, and then we must be bound and engag'd to perform those Conditions, that we may have a Right to his Favour. This is the Case of

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all Mankind, as well of Infants as of grown Persons : As appears plainly in that such by God's Direction and Appointment were to be brought into Covenant with him in order to have a Right to, and that they might enjoy his Favour. And when we see the Males were directed and order'd to be thus brought into a State of Salvation, we must believe the Females were under the same Law, that they must come into Favour by coming under such Engagements too, or by entring into Covenant with God.

Further ; When a Rite and Ceremony is appointed by which we must take upon us this Engagement, and enter into Covenant with God, or be incorporated into Christ so as to be in a State of Salvation by him, then the ordinary way of Salvation is to make use of that Ceremony and Rite of Admission into Covenant with God : It is then necessary as an ordinary appointed *means* of Salvation, and cannot be neglected without Hazard of Salvation. It is certain that those who were appointed to be Circumcised could not be reckon'd in Covenant with God if they were not Circumcised ; This is plainly spoken of in *Gen.* 17. 14. Where, after God had appointed Circumcision to be a Token of the Covenant which he then made with Men, he expressly says, of those who were hereby to be admitted into it they should *be cut off from his people*, they should not be reckon'd in Covenant with him, nor have any Right to the Favours of the Covenant unless they were Circumcised. It will show us the common Necessity of this Sacrament as a means of Salvation if we consider that 'tis by virtue of the Covenant of Grace, that Faith it self is a means of Salvation ; It is therefore by our entring into Covenant that our Faith can be to us a means of Salvation, which certainly makes it necessary to Salvation, that we enter into Covenant, and then this Sacrament must be necessary, by which as has been prov'd we are now to enter into Covenant with God. It may be said to

be a means necessary to render our Faith a means effectual and accepted to our Salvation. If we take the Sacrament whole as containing both the outward Rite and Ceremony, and the thing signified on our part by it, we must needs see and acknowledge it necessary as a means of Salvation: For the thing signified in the taking it is an Engagement to put away all Wickedness, and to honour and obey God according to the Doctrines and Laws of Christian Religion. This is that by which it is said to save us, or bring us into a State of Salvation by the Apostle *Peter*, when he says, *Baptism saves us, not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer, the Stipulation, the Engagement of a good conscience towards God.* If it may be said a thing is then necessary as a means when it does so certainly procure a thing, that it being had, the thing to which it is a certain and necessary means is also had, and without it the thing cannot be had: It follows, that the taking this Sacrament as it includes the taking upon us the Engagement mention'd, must be necessary as a means of Salvation, for certainly that Engagement must be necessary to give us a Right to Divine Favour; we must enter into Covenant that we may have Right to the Favours of the Covenant. The taking this Engagement upon us in such a manner, or by such a Rite is matter of Precept, but the outward Rite and Ceremony is not all that is in Baptism, for that by which it is a means of Salvation is the Engagement that is undertaken in the use of it. And yet further it may be said that the Precept which requires the use of Baptism, requires a means of Salvation, for it makes it a means of taking upon us, that Engagement which brings us into a State of Salvation. And thus even the outward Rite and Ceremony will appear to have its Necessity too, as a means of Salvation, when it appears to be an appointed means ordinarily necessary to bring us under that Engagement by which we must come to be in Covenant with God, and in a State of Salvation.

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Certainly it will appear herein to be greatly necessary to Infants, and rather more necessary to them than to grown Persons. They are not capable of being actually possess'd with those Qualifications which are the Conditions of the Covenant ; They may indeed, as we have seen, be engag'd and bound to them, and they can no other way be entred into Covenant. They must therefore by taking this Sacrament which is the Rite and Ceremony appointed by God to bring us under this Engagement be entred into Covenant, they have no other means or way of coming under this Engagement : To be sure we have reason out of a just deference to the Divine Institutions to believe no other means or way will be allow'd where they might have this, but it is neglected. They need to be entred into Covenant with God, if all must in the ordinary way be saved by entring into Covenant with God ; And Baptism now being the ordinary means of entring all Persons into Covenant with God, it is necessary to them, as a means of Salvation, and especially necessary to those who can use no other means of Salvation.

Having said these things concerning the Necessity of Baptism ; I think I ought to add what may recommend them, and that I shall do by producing what has been said to this matter by a very Learned Divine of our Church ; I mean Dr. *Sam. Ward*, who was Margaret Professor in the University of *Cambridge*, and had the Honour to be one of the Deputies of the Church of *England* at the Synod of *Dort*. He speaking of the Sacraments in General says. *The Grace effected or accomplished by the Sacraments is our Union or Incorporation into Christ the Head. The Sacraments confer Grace, that is Union with Christ. The necessity of which Union thus appears : When our first Parents fell they could not derive original Righteousness to their Offspring. Nor is any one born of a just Man, but must be justified by Grace. All Grace is to be deriv'd from Jesus Christ as the Fountain, and is not deriv'd from him to Man, unless Man be engrafted*

ted into him as a Branch into a Vine. The Principal Efficient of this Engrafting is the Spirit of God, the Instrument by which he performs it, is the Sacrament. (Tract. 1. *Qui de numero & Efficacia sacr*, p. 39.) Again, Baptism (says he) is the only Means, and remedy, or Sacrament, instituted by God for applying to Infants the Merit of Christ to the washing away of Original Sin. (Tract. post. *qui de Effic. Bapt. quantum ad Parvulos*, p. 119.) Again he says, Baptism according to the Church of England is necessary, not only by the Necessity of a Precept, but also by the Necessity of an ordinary Means, and that to Infants, for the washing away of Original Sin. From whence it is, that of Baptised-Infants it is said in the Rubrick of our Liturgy they have all that is necessary to their Salvation, which must be understood both of the Necessity of a Precept and of a Means. And then the Children of the Faithful, who are not Baptised, have not all the Means which by Divine Appointment is ordinarily necessary to their Salvation. (*Ib.* p. 187.) Thus is the Doctrine of our Church, represented by this considerable Person, who in his Time was judg'd to understand it well. And all that are acquainted with the Pure and Primitive Christianity know, that the Ancients had a very great Opinion of the Necessity of this Sacrament. Who if they did set the Necessity of this Sacrament too high, it is an Extream less to be fear'd, I believe, and less presumptuous, than that of bringing it too low. 'Tis certainly safer to have a great Opinion of the Necessity of our Saviour's Appointments to the ends which they are appointed for. And as the Ancients confounded the Pelagian Error by what the Scripture plainly obliges us to believe and say concerning the Necessity of Baptism, and by the Churches universal and known Practice of Baptising-Infants ; So the New Divinity which has brought down the Necessity of this Sacrament, has given occasion, or at least Encouragement and Assistance to the Error herein oppos'd. This has been done both by the Predestinarian and Arminian Scheme

Schemes of Divinity, which, in ways differing from one another, have both deviated from the Church of God, from the Scriptures, and the Truth.

Thus I think it is fully prov'd, that Infants have need of Baptism in order to their Salvation: And then it will certainly follow from hence, that they ought to be brought to this Sacrament.

If we consider their Baptism as a Rite and Ceremony appointed and used for the devoting them to God, and engaging them to his Service, their Parents are bound to bring them to it: Because they who are engag'd themselves to serve and honour God, are therein bound to engage as far as they can their Children too. This is an Obligation which is naturally joyn'd with their own Dedication to God: Their Infants are as a part of themselves, and they do not fully answer their own Dedication if they do not in the appointed way dedicate them to God; They are not themselves entirely dedicated till these as they have them are dedicated also. And most certainly if any make a solemn and formal Dedication of their Children to God in any other way while they neglect this which is appointed, this will, as much as any thing can do it, deserve the Name of Will-worship, and Humane Invention in the Service of God. To avoid that Charge and Guilt then we must dedicate them in this way. Thus we lie under Obligation in point of Piety towards God, to devote our Children to serve and honour him in Baptism.

Again, If we consider this Sacrament as a Rite and Ceremony appointed to bring all Persons into Covenant with God, and so into a State of Salvation, and therefore necessary to bring our Infants into such a State; Then the Parents and those who have the disposal of Infants are under an Obligation of Charity to bring them to Baptism. It is an exercise of Charity due to the poor Infants to do this: To put them if we can into a State of Salvation. But to withhold them

from Baptism is to deprive them of the only means which they are capable of having applied to them for Salvation: It is to deprive them of what is necessary to their Salvation in an ordinary way. And this must be Cruelty to them from whatever Principle it proceeds. This is to hazard their Salvation as much as we can, when Charity obliges us to do all that we can to secure it. To hope they shall be sav'd without Baptism, is to hope without a Promise, and is a sinful Presumption, especially when join'd with the wilful neglect, or refusal to baptise them: And he is certainly wanting in Love to his Child, who will let it remain in a Condition wherein he has no Ground to hope for its Salvation. Therefore they who have Infants at their disposal ought to bring them to Baptism if they can.

There is nothing can be said against the foregoing Argument but this; That how much soever our Children do need this Sacrament, it must not be administered to them unless God would allow this. If they cannot be sav'd without it, they must not be sav'd unless God would give leave to have them Baptised. And this Allowance of their Baptism, is that we shall evidently show is prov'd by the foregoing Grounds, which I proposed in the next place to do.

The Second Argument I said which we may derive from the foregoing Grounds, for the Baptising of Infants is this. We may gather from thence God's Allowance, that they should be Baptised, and therefore this Sacrament may and ought to be administered to them. I shall make it appear from what has been said, that God allows the Baptising of Infants, and to do it the more distinctly and evidently, I shall proceed in the following Method, (1.) I shall gather what may show us why God *would* allow this; (2.) I shall make it appear that he has formerly allow'd them as much as the Baptising of them comes to. (3.) I shall show we have good reason to believe he does allow them

them still as much as formerly he has done. (4.) I shall observe some Grounds to believe that he does allow them to be Baptised.

(1.) We may observe in the foregoing Grounds, good reason to believe that God *would* allow our Infants to be Baptised. It is a thing which upon a little Consideration will appear altogether agreeing to the Nature of things, suitable to the Justice and Wisdom, and Goodness of God, and to the Nature of Man, and the Necessity of our common Condition, that he should allow this.

We are all his Creatures as well as the first Pair of Mankind, and it must be acknowledg'd it is he that hath made us: therefore *Solomon* in urging the young Man to due Acknowledgment of God, says, *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy Youth*. And as he is our Creator, we do naturally owe him all possible Honour and Obedience. It is but equitable and just then that we should be from the first dedicated and engag'd to this, that at our beginning to be we should be devoted to serve him with our Bodies and Souls which are his; And then it is agreeable to his Justice to require and allow this; and it can be no wrong to an Infant to bring it under such Engagement; 'tis herein bound but to that which is due to God from the Nature of things, and results from our Relation and Obligations to him.

If it be fitting that we should be devoted to God at all in our Infancy, 'tis very fitting that it should be done in this way, and by taking and using such a Rite and Ceremony as washing the Body with Water. The constant Custom of all Nations, as hath been said, of washing new-born Infants from the outward Pollution which they bring into the World with them, renders washing a very fit Ceremony to signify and represent the putting away Sin and Wickedness, and an Engagement to live pure and holy. The World in using such a Custom for Conveniency was prepar'd, as we may say,

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say, to receive the Ceremony for a Religious Use; and by the Nature, and civil Use of it, would be the better inabled to attend to and mind the Things signified in the Religious use of it. 'Tis true the Infant knows nothing of this at the time, but when he is grown up he may be made the more sensible of the Sinful Pollution of his Nature which he brought into the World with him, and of his Engagement to put away and mortify all Evil, and to give himself up to a Godly and Good Life, when he is told by the Witnesses of his Baptism that such a Religious Ceremony was used to him. 'Tis agreeable then to the Divine Justice to appoint and allow this early Dedication of Infants to him; and suitable to his Wisdom to allow the doing it in this way, and by such a Rite and Ceremony as Baptism.

Again, We have great Reason to believe that God would allow Infants to be Baptised from his Infinite Goodness and Compassion, especially as it is shown in the Redemption of the World by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Infants and very Young Children while they live are a great part of Mankind, and a very great part of Mankind die in Infancy and Childhood; But we cannot think that so great a part are utterly neglected in the Provision that has been made by the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God for the Salvation of Mankind; we must believe then that they may be partakers of Salvation by Jesus Christ, that God allows him to be a Saviour to them as well as others: Yea we may believe with Reason, that he would rather be allow'd for a Saviour to them than to others, in that they do not need a Salvation by any actual Guilt of their own, but derive this Misery from the Sin of the first Parents only. 'Tis agreeable to the Divine Goodness to allow, that as they are undone by the first *Adam* they may be saved by the Second. And then 'tis agreeable to his Goodness to allow that they be united to Christ for this purpose, and be brought into

into a State of Salvation, or into the Condition of having a Right to it. And when a Way and Means of admission into such a State is appointed, we may believe the Goodness of God would allow that Way and Means to be applied to all that need to be brought into a State of Salvation; and then that he would allow Infants to be Baptised, because they need to be brought into a State of Salvation; and this Sacrament is now the appointed Means of entering into such a State. When we find no other way appointed but this, or to be sure none that Infants are capable of, we may reasonably believe God would allow them this if he allows them Salvation by Jesus Christ. It must be said either there is no Method or Means of enjoying Salvation by Jesus Christ appointed, which is apparently contrary to the whole Tenour of Holy Scripture, or the Method and Means of obtaining this is allowed to Infants, or such cannot be saved by Jesus Christ, but this too is contrary to the Holy Scripture as well as to the Goodness and Compassion of God. The Enemies of their Baptism cannot deny but they may be sav'd by Jesus Christ; they will not deny them Salvation tho' they deny them Baptism. And thus they fall into the Absurdity of saying that God allows them the greater Favour, and will not allow them the lesser, that he grants them the End, but refuses them the Means appointed for obtaining that End. Baptism they will have to be too Holy a Thing to be administred to them, but Heaven is not too Holy a Place to receive them. The Church on Earth must not look upon them as Members, when yet they may be admitted into the Church in Heaven. They will have it that they shall be saved if they die in their Infancy, and by Jesus Christ, tho' they will not know how or in what Way this should come to pass. They might know from Scripture that this must come to pass by their being brought into Covenant with God,
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and being devoted to him by a Rite and Ceremony appointed to Mankind to be used for this Purpose, but they will not see and acknowledge this because they will not allow they may be Baptised. But certainly when we find a way appointed for Men to come into a State of Salvation by Christ, and do believe Infants may come into a State of Salvation, we may reasonably believe God allows them to be brought into that State by the way appointed, and then that he allows them to be Baptised. Thus we see that in what has been said, there is good Reason to believe God would allow this: there is nothing in it unreasonable, nothing disagreeing either to himself or the common State of Human Nature: And then this gives us leave to believe that he has allow'd the Baptising of Infants.

(2.) I shall now make it appear that he has formerly allow'd to Infants as much as the Baptising of them comes to, and from thence also we may reasonably conclude that he now allows them to be Baptised. There is nothing given them by us in Baptising them, there is no Obligation laid upon them, no Priviledge or Honour conferr'd, nor any thing done to Infants, but what has been by his exprefs Order and Direction done before. He has in the Law of Circumcision, which allow'd Infants the Sign and Token of a Covenant with him, evidently shown that he has been willing, he has allow'd, that they should be brought into Covenant with him. And if he has been willing to admit them to this, we have no reason to believe he does not still allow it, unless we could find he had any where forbid it, which we cannot do; and indeed considering the Reason and Nature of the Thing it is Unreasonable and Foolish to look for, or expect to find, any such Prohibition. In the Law of Circumcision God has given leave and exprefs Order to apply to Infants a Sacrament which was a Means and Token of their entring into Covenant with him, he has allow'd the bringing them

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them into such a State by a Sacrament, and this is that which is done in the Baptising them; He has therefore allow'd them as much as is done in this, and therefore we believe he does allow them this.

I shall make good this Matter more particularly, that it may be the more evident and clear, and that I may the better convince the Gainsayers. If he has allow'd Infants to be brought into Covenant with him as we have seen he has done, he has allow'd these two Things in it; (1.) That they have the Honour of being dedicated and devoted to him; That they be engag'd to perform Mans Part of the Covenant when they shall become capable to do so. (2.) And he has also allow'd them thereupon to come to have a Right, a Covenant Right to his Favour and Mercy, they have had a Right to the Blessings engaged for by him in his part of the Covenant. These two Things I shall distinctly show by some very plain and express Texts of Scripture.

He has allow'd them to be engag'd to the Duties which are to be perform'd on Man's part of a Covenant with God, to those things which are requir'd by God as the Conditions of his Favour and our Happiness. It is evident in the Law of Circumcision that this Sacrament was order'd to be administred to Infants; But the Apostle *Paul* tells us *Gal. 5. 3.* He who was circumcised became a *Debtor to do the whole Law*; He therein took upon him an Engagement to Obey and Honour God according to the Rules and Directions given by the Law of *Moses*. This then must be said of the Infants Circumcised, as well as of the grown Persons, even they as well as these did come under such Engagement. Again, to prove this, We may consider the Instance referr'd to before, concerning the engaging the People in Covenant with God at Mount *Sinai*, before his publishing to them the Law of the ten Commandments, which is related in *Exod. 19.* We know that they then engag'd to obey whatever Discoveries
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it should please God to make to them of his Will: And they took upon them this Engagement in and by a solemn Baptism, which makes the Instance more evidently to our Purpose. But we will now observe that not only the grown Persons of that Nation were then and there engag'd to obey the Commands of God, but the Infants among them came under this Engagement at the same time. This indeed is not express'd in *Exod.* 19. but the Engagement is spoken of as undertaken by the whole Nation of *Israel* in general; And we shall find by another place of Scripture that those who were Infants among them did then come under this Engagement too. *Moses* tells us plainly that Infants were engag'd then to obey the Commands of God in *Deut.* 5. ver. 2, 3. He is there speaking of this very Affair, and says, *The Lord our God made a Covenant with us in Horeb: The Lord made not this Covenant with our Fathers, (that is not only with our Fathers) but with us even with us, who are all of us here alive this day.* Now we must know that the Fathers he speaks of were those who were now generally worn out, and whose Carcasses were fallen in the Wilderness according to the Divine Threatning. For *Moses* spoke these Words now to the People when they were upon the Borders of *Canaan*, and just before their entering into it: He spoke them to the Children of those who were the Fathers at the time when this Covenant was made. And we have Reason to believe that many of those whom he now spoke to were Infants, or very Young Children at that time, for that we know there was a Space of forty Years from the giving of that Law at Mount *Sinai* to the time when *Moses* spoke these Words. And that the Covenant he mentions in *Deuteronomy* means the same which is spoken of in *Exod.* 19. appears in his Discourse, which immediately follows these Words; For he therein repeats those Ten Commandments as a principal part of the Duty which they had engag'd and bound themselves to perform at

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Mount Sinai. We see then here, beyond all possibility of denial, that God has allow'd Infants to be engag'd in Covenant with him, to perform the Duties requir'd on Man's Part of the Covenant; we see they have been engag'd to this by a Solemn Washing, or by the Sacrament of Baptism.

Further, If God has allow'd Infants to be engag'd to Man's Duty, it cannot be doubted but he has allow'd them also to come to have a Right to his Favour and Mercy. This is inseparably annexed to the former: For if God requires any thing of Man in the Way of a Covenant, that very Term speaks the requiring it as the Condition of his Favour; and then the Performance of that will be attended with the Exercises of his Favour, and the Engagement to that which is the entering into Covenant with God gives a right to his Favour. So that if Infants have been allow'd to come into Covenant with God, if they have been allow'd to be engag'd to the Duty required on Mans part as the Condition of his Favour, they have been allow'd to come to have a Covenant Right to the Mercy and Favour of God.

But we shall also see this very evident by several Places of Scripture. It is clear and plain in the Establishment of Circumcision to be a token of a Covenant, and a Right and Sacrament of entering into Covenant. This we know was order'd and therefore allow'd to be administered to Infants; and as the Covenant which that was a token of, and which was entred into in the taking it, did oblige Man to his Duty, so it did also give him a Right to God's Mercy; and as the Circumcision bound Infants to the former, it endow'd them as I may say, with the latter, in entering them into Covenant, and then we see they have been allow'd to be brought to a Covenant right to God's Mercy by a Sacrament. This which I have said is evident in *Gen. 17.* where we may see in *v.* that 'tis the Engagement on God's part that he would be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed upon entering into Cove-

Covenant with him by Circumcision. In the Covenant propos'd and entred into at Mount *Sinai*, and which as we have seen the Infants of *Israel* were engag'd in, this is the Engagement on God's part, that if they would obey his Voice and keep his Covenant, they should be *a peculiar treasure to him above all people*. Yet a further Proof I shall add to what has been already made use of, that God has allow'd Infants both to be engag'd to Duty, and to come to a Right to his Mercy: This appears in plain Words, in *Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12. verses*, *Moses* says there to the Nation of *Israel*, *Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your Captains of your Tribes, your Elders, your Officers with all the Men of Israel, your little ones, your Wives, &c. That thou shouldst enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: That he may establish thee to day for a People unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God.* To enter into the Oath of God can mean nothing else but to come to have a Right to the Favour promis'd and engag'd to in his Covenant with them: To come to enjoy the Priviledge of having him a God to them, which as it is the same Expression which was used in his Engagement with *Abraham*, so it includes, as I have said, all the Favour of the Covenant of Grace. And this it is there expresly said their little ones did as well their Elders.

I know these Texts are pretended by the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism to concern only an Abrogated Covenant of Works, and therefore not to be to our Purpose. I shall not so far digress as to handle that matter distinctly. I shall only desire them to consider that the Jews were most certainly under a Despenfation of the Covenant of Grace, they had Salvation offer'd to them, and many of them obtain'd it by Jesus Christ, for there is no other Name, nor ever was, by which any Man can be sav'd. The Covenant then which they were engag'd in with God was the Cove-
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nant of Grace, for that was always the way and method of Salvation since the fall of Man. And the Mercy promis'd and engag'd on God's part in the Covenant which they entred into was fully the Mercy of the Covenant of Grace. Whatsoever then is abrogated and laid aside of the Duties then required of Men, this does not prove that they were not under a Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, or a Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ. And then we see plainly by these Texts, that Infants have been allow'd to be brought into that Covenant which is a Method of Salvation by Jesus Christ, to be bound to all that Duty which it did require on the part of Man when more was requir'd then is now, and to have a Covenant-Right to God's Mercy. This has been allow'd them, and therefore we may believe it is still allow'd them, unless it had pleas'd God to reveal his Mind to the contrary which he has nowhere done. And in this he has allow'd them formerly as much as the giving them Baptism amounts to.

(3.) To prove from the Grounds before given of Infant-Baptism, that God allows it I shall now show ; That as we see he has allow'd Infants as much as the Baptising of them amounts to, he did so before the coming of our Saviour, and the setting up of the Christian Church, so we have very good Grounds to believe that he does still allow them as much as this, and therefore that he does allow them to be Baptised. We shall see good reason to believe this when we understand and consider these two things which are said concerning the Christian Church in the New Testament. 1. That Christians are reckon'd of the Seed of *Abraham*. 2. That the Church is reckon'd and spoke of but as a Continuation of the Jewish Church, or as one Church with that. They both are the Body of Christ.

First, I shall make use of this to our Purpose that Christians are reckon'd and said to be the Seed of *Abraham*. We see in *Gen* 17. That the Seed of *Abr-*

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ham had the Priviledge allow'd them of admitting their Infant-Males to Circumcision. In *ver. 10.* 'tis said, *every Man-child among you shall be Circumcised*: Therefore all of them might admit their Infants into Covenant with God by the Sacrament appointed for that purpose. If Christians then are in the Account of God the Seed of *Abraham*, we may believe he allows them the Priviledge of bringing their Infants into Covenant with him, by the Sacrament appointed for that Purpose. We can see no reason to doubt but they who are his Seed, as Christians are, have as great Priviledge as those who were his Seed by natural Descent from him. But I shall make it appear that we have good Reason not at all to doubt of this, and shall prove that Christians are reckon'd and said to be the Seed of *Abraham*, and that we have good Reason to believe God allows them the same Priviledge in this Case, which the Law of Circumcision allow'd his natural Descendants.

To prove that Christians are reckon'd and said to be the Seed of *Abraham*, I shall not need to produce any more then these two plain Texts of Scripture: The one in *Gal. 3. 29.* The Apostle there says to Christians, *If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed*, intimating both that they were Christ's, and were *Abraham's* Seed. The other place of Scripture to this purpose is that in *Rom. 4. 11.* where the Apostle says, *Abraham is the Father of all them that believe*, and that the Promise made to him was made to *all the Seed*, not only to that which is of the Law, that is, his Natural Posterity, but to that also which is of the Faith of *Abraham*; to those who are the Children of his Faith, as the Apostle speaks, that is, by succeeding and imitating him in his Faith: And therefore he calls *Abraham the Father of us all*, *ver. 16.* meaning by *us all*, both Jew and Gentile that believe, not only those who are naturally descended from him, but those also who are not so, but do believe.

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Now, as to the Natural Descendants of *Abraham*, it cannot be question'd but they had the Priviledge of bringing their Infants into Covenant with God by the Sacrament of Admission. The general Promise to *Abraham* was, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed* : Meaning he would be a God to his Seed upon their Admission or Engagement into Covenant with God by being Circumcised. But this gave a Right to all his Natural Descendants to be admitted into Covenant by a Sacrament : It declar'd his Willingness and Purpose to be a God to them, and then it declar'd his Willingness and Allowance that all they should be admitted into the State and Condition of having him for their God, that is, into the Covenant which was entered into by Circumcision. This is then evidently allow'd to his Natural Descendants, that they might be brought into Covenant by the Sacrament of Admission.

But if we look further we shall see, that when Circumcision was first instituted, it was not only allow'd to be administred to the Infants naturally descended from *Abraham*, but even to Infants that were otherwise his. 'Tis said, *Gen. 17. 12, 13. He that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy Seed must needs be circumcised.* This Allowance was made to *Abraham*, and was establish'd as a Law for Ages to come after him, as is plain enough. Those of his Natural Seed after him had the Priviledge, not only of bringing their Natural Children into Covenant, but also that of bringing any Children which were otherwise theirs into the same State, whether they were so by being born in the House, or by being bought with Money. But can we think that the Natural Seed of *Abraham* were allow'd to bring such Children into Covenant with God, and that those who are his Spiritual Seed, as Christians may be call'd, are not allow'd to bring their Natural Children into Covenant with God.

Further, we shall see that those who were the Seed of *Abraham* by Faith, in the Times of the Jewish Church had this Priviledge, 'tho' they were not naturally descended from *Abraham*; And then sure we have therein good Reason to believe that Christians who are also the Seed of *Abraham* by Faith, have this Priviledge since the coming of Christ. It cannot be imagin'd why this should be granted before, and denied now. We may see this Priviledge granted or allow'd before at the first Constitution of the Jewish Church under the Conduct of *Moses*. In *Exod.* 12. 48. there is this Rule concerning the Passover. *When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his Males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it.* 'Tis expressly said in the same Verse. No Uncircumcised Person shall eat the Passover, that is, no Male that is Uncircumcised; This makes it necessary that the stranger himself, who would eat the Passover must be Circumcised. And then the Law signifies that he being so, all his Males, whatever Male-Infants he had in his House, whether they were his Natural Children, or the Children bought with his Mony, were order'd and allow'd to be Circumcised. Thus a Person who was in his Mind and Heart perswaded to embrace the Jewish Religion, and who was himself thereupon engaged to it by Circumcision, and who was so, by Faith, a Child of *Abraham*, he might, as we see, admit his Infants into Covenant with God, by the Sacrament, whereby himself was admitted. And this sure gives us good Ground to believe that the same Priviledge is still continued to those who are the Seed of *Abraham*, as following him in his Faith; and then that Christians who are so his Seed may admit their Infants into Covenant by the Sacrament, which is now appointed for Admission, and then that they may bring them to be Baptised.

Secondly, Another Reason we have to believe that as much is allow'd to the Christian Church in this

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Matter as was allow'd to the Jewish, as I have said, is, That we find the Christian Church reckon'd and said to be, but as it were a Continuation of the Jewish, as but one Church with this.

The Jewish Church remain'd and was continued in those of that Nation and Church, who believ'd in Christ, and they were the Foundation and beginning of the Christian Church. And those who were converted from among the Gentiles to Christianity were but added to the same Church. Christians then must be reckon'd Members of the same Church with the Jews, And if they are so we have good Ground to believe that they have the same Priviledge in this Case with the Jews, the same which the Jews had as Members of the Church of God. And that the Jews had this Priviledge of admitting their Infants into Covenant with God, as they themselves were by such Admission Members of the Church, and not meerly by their Natural Birth or Descent from *Abraham* appears; In that we find those who were Members of that Church, tho' they were not Natural Jews, yet had this Priviledge allow'd them. And if we find any who were Members of that Church, tho' they were not natural or born *Israelites* had this Priviledge allow'd them, as we must say it was allow'd them, as being Members of the Church, so we may justly believe that others who are Members of that Church, tho' they are not Natural Jews have this Priviledge still. And we do certainly find that others besides Natural Jews, becoming Members of that Church were allow'd this Priviledge in that Text foremention'd, which is plain and full to this Purpose. I mean *Exod.* 12. 48.

Let us see then what Ground we have to say, that Christians are to be reckon'd Members of the same Church with the Jews. And this the Apostle does most evidently and fully teach us, *Rom.* 11. 7. He there compares the Church of God in the Times before Christ to an Olive Tree. From this Tree or Church he says some Branches upon the coming of Christ were broken

off, and others were added in their room and place, the Tree or Church remaining still in Being. By the Branches broken off, he means those of the Jews, who would not believe in Christ. They were Branches of the Olive-Tree before, by their having receiv'd the Sacrament which entred them into Covenant with God; but now a new Dispensation of that Covenant was to be set up, and all that were entred into it must be Baptised into the Belief that Jesus was the true Christ, and this many of them would not submit to, and so were broken off, they were no longer of the Church. By the Branches which were grafted into their place, he means those, who from among the Gentiles, or other Nations of the World were converted to Christianity and Baptised. They were grafted in among those Branches which remain'd, therefore the Olive-Tree it self still remain'd and was continued, therefore the Church of God remain'd, the Body and Community who were in Covenant with God, and United to Christ, the Church which was always the Body of Christ. Those Heathen Converts were added to a Church in being: It was still one and the same Church, the Company of those who partake in the Merits and Righteousness of Jesus Christ; but made up then of believing Jews and Gentiles.

Now the Case being thus. We must needs think that the Church which continued did retain the same Priviledge in this Case which they had before of admitting their Infants by a Sacrament into the Church or Covenant with God. And if they retain'd the same Priviledge which they had before, then others who were added to them, and came to be of the same Church or Body with them, we must believe were continued in the same Priviledge. The remaining Members of the Church did not lose the Priviledge which they had before as Members of the Church, nothing can be found in Scripture, or imagin'd, I think, that may make us believe they did. And then we can see nothing which can give us good Reason to believe that

that those who were admitted into the same Church, have not the same Priviledge with those who were continued in the same Church; or that those who were added might not as Members of the same Church enjoy the Priviledge which the others who continued in it enjoy'd as Members of the Church. They might both then we may conclude, bring their Infants into Covenant with God by the Sacrament appointed for bringing Persons into Covenant with God. If the Church of God were allow'd, as much as Baptism amounts to before our Saviour's Time, and the Christian Church is still the same Church of God, we may believe such a Priviledge as this is belonging to the Members of the same Church still.

(4.) I shall demonstrate further, That there are not only these Reasons to believe that God does allow Infants still as much as the Baptising them amounts to, but also there are other things which, upon the Grounds laid down, do give us good reason to believe directly that God does now allow Infants to be Baptised. I shall insist only upon these two Particulars to this Purpose. (1.) That the Covenant which was enter'd into in the taking Circumcision did require the Duties, and promise the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace. (2.) That the Apostle *Paul* argues Circumcision is not necessary to the Christian Church upon the Account of the Benefit which the Christians receiv'd by Baptism.

First, It is a good Reason to believe that God does allow the Baptising of Infants in that the Covenant which was entered into in the taking of Circumcision did require the Duties or Conditions, and promise the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace. We have prov'd that Faith and Obedience were requir'd in that Covenant, and that all the Favour of the Covenant of Grace was included and promised in this, that God engag'd to be a God to them; and it has appear'd that Circumcision was allow'd to be administred to Infants,

they were then allow'd Admission into the Covenant of Grace, into that Covenant which is the method and way of Salvation by Jesus Christ. And then since the Sacrament of Baptism is now the appointed Sacrament for bringing all Persons into the Covenant of Grace, we may very reasonably believe he allows them this Sacrament too. God does herein teach us that the want of actual Faith, and of distinct Resolutions of Obedience in an Infant, shall not exclude him from his Covenant; This is no Obstruction of his entring into that Covenant which requires Faith and Obedience, as the Conditions, and which promises Salvation by Christ, as the Favour of it. God himself teaches us he does not require these Conditions actually to be in all that enter into that Covenant, but only of those who are capable of them at that time: He teaches us himself, that the Engagement of these is allow'd, and shall be accepted from them, while they are not capable of more. For we see he has expressly order'd and allow'd Infants to be admitted into Covenant with him, tho' they could no more understand what they did, and could no more believe or obey at that time than they cando these things now, nor could be actually possess'd of the Qualifications requisite to an Interest in his Favour.

These People would not be so puzzled as they are in this Matter if they would receive the true and right State of the Case, which I think appears to be this. The Holy Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament do make Faith and Obedience the Conditions of Salvation by Jesus Christ, or of our obtaining the Mercy promised on God's part of the Covenant of Grace; but they do not make Faith and Obedience the Conditions to be actually perform'd by all in order to their *entring* into that Covenant: We may be entred into that Covenant by engaging and taking upon us to believe and obey. We must actually believe and obey if we live to be capable of them, in order to our enjoying

joying the Blessings and Benefits on God's part ; but 'tis enough that we be engag'd, that we be solemnly bound and devoted to this, especially by a Rite and Ceremony appointed by God himself to lay that Obligation upon us, for the entring us into Covenant with God. And till we are capable of performing the Engagement, the Engagement it self, having entred us into Covenant, brings us to a Right and Title to the Mercies of God. To understand this Matter rightly we must know, that the Conditions of the Covenant are not the Conditions of our entring into the Covenant : When we take the Sacrament which enters us into Covenant, we take upon us an Engagement, we find our selves to perform, when we shall become capable, the Conditions of the Covenant : But God does not expect or require the actual Performance of them, till we are capable of doing it, nor does he exclude us from his Covenant, or a Right to his Mercy till then : He allows and accepts of our Engagement to perform them, and thereupon gives us a Right to his Mercy and Favour. This we evidently see has been done in the Case of Circumcision. Every one that was Circumcised became therein a Debtor to do the whole Law ; Infants were Circumcised, and then they were engag'd to this ; but 'tis certain they could do no more then engage to this, and God accepted of that in them, and gave them a present Right thereupon to his Promised or Covenanted Mercy. And then from hence, certainly, we may justly and reasonably believe, that he does allow the Baptising of Infants, since Baptism is now the solemn Rite appointed for the engaging Mankind in the Service and Acknowledgement of God, and of obtaining a Right to the Favours of the New Covenant. There is nothing more allow'd them herein than has been allow'd them, nor is there any more Obligation laid upon them than before, but rather less, as the Yoke and Burden of the Ceremonies of the Law of *Moses* is now laid aside.

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Secondly, It is a good Reason to believe God does allow the Baptising of Infants, that we find the Apostle *Paul* urging that Circumcision is not necessary to the Christian Church upon the Account of their having the Sacrament of Baptism, and by reason of the Benefit of that.

Circumcision was a Rite of Admission into the Covenant of Grace which was allow'd to Infants, in the times of the Jewish Church : If now there were no Rite of Admission allow'd them, this would be still necessary to them, unless they were born in that Covenant which the Scripture contradicts. As they are not born within that Covenant now any more than formerly by all that appears in the New Testament, and in the Reason of the thing, they must be brought into it. A Sacrament of Admission we find appointed in the Christian Church, and that is Baptism ; If then Infants may not have this Sacrament applied to them, they are left in the Christian Church without any means to admit, or bring them into Covenant, and then the Sacrament which was a means for Admission of Infants before would be necessary still, because Infants would have no Sacrament, or Means of Admission without it. But since we find they have been admitted, and by a Sacrament, and from thence have reason to believe they may be admitted still, and by a Sacrament too, we must believe that the Sacrament which is now the Means of Admission to the Christian Church may be administred to them ; God allows it, and then they may be Baptised.

Let us see then the Proof of this, That the Apostle *Paul* does argue from the Sacrament of Baptism against the Necessity of Circumcision to the Christian Church. This we may see he does, *Col.* 2. 11, 12. If we read that whole Chapter it will appear that the Apostle there sets himself to satisfy the Christians of that Church that they had no need of, and were not oblig'd to use, the Rites and Ceremonies of the Law of *Moses*. In these Words he Instances in Circumcision

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in particular ; and to satisfy them they did not need to continue the use of that, he lets them know, That in Christ they received a Circumcision not made with Hands, even the putting away the Body of the Sins of the Flesh. By which he means that in and by Christ they receiv'd the Inward and Spiritual Grace of the Sacrament of Circumcision, that Grace which had been promis'd and engag'd to them on God's part in their taking of Circumcision ; this is said in *ver. 11.* And then in *ver. 12.* he signifies by what Means and Sacrament instead of Circumcision, they had receiv'd this Inward and Spiritual Grace from Jesus Christ, and that Sacrament he says was Baptism : for they had receiv'd this Grace in being buried with Christ in Baptism, wherein also they were risen with him. In which Words he teaches us that these Christians having been in their Baptism united to Christ, or Baptised into Christ, as he elsewhere speaks, They did thereby become Partakers of the Spirit, who had bestow'd upon them the Inward and Spiritual Grace of Circumcision fully, in that they had obtain'd thereby a Death unto Sin, and a new Birth unto Righteousness. Upon this Ground he would have them account that Circumcision was no longer necessary to the Church, the Sacrament of Baptism being now the appointed Mean of conferring and bestowing the Grace of that.

Now this plainly gives us ground to conclude God's Allowance of the Baptising of Infants in the Christian Church. If Infants do now need the Inward and Spiritual Grace of Circumcision, and may have it (as has been prov'd in showing they may have a Right to the Favours of the Covenant of Grace) then they need and may have Circumcision still, unless some other Sacrament and Mean to confer that Grace be now allow'd them. And since another Sacrament and Mean for conferring this is appointed in the Christian Church, and the Apostle argues that Circumcision is not now necessary because of that Sacrament, it is most evident he reckons, and teaches us to account, that God does allow

the administering that Sacrament to Infants. The Apostle would not have argued that Circumcision was needless because the Church had Baptism, unless Infants might now be Baptised as they had before been Circumcised: For still would Circumcision be necessary to the Church because necessary to Infants without this, and his Argument would not have been good if they might not be Baptised. For there had been Room for those who were for the retaining of Circumcision to reply; But tho the grown Persons converted to Christianity from among the Gentiles may have receiv'd by Baptism the Grace of Circumcision, yet must that Sacrament be necessary to our Infants, unless they were allow'd to be Baptised. His using this Argument then is a plain Indication that there was no room for such a Reply in the Case, and then it shows that God does allow the Baptising of Infants in the Christian Church, and indeed that this was commonly known and practised in those times.

Thus I think the second Argument taken from the foregoing Grounds of Infant Baptism is made good; that is God's Allowance of this. And 'tis evident if God allows this it is not unlawful, there is no Sin in it, no guilty Will-worship, no Profanation of an Holy Ordinance, none of those Faults which the Adversaries of this Practice charge it with. It is a sufficient answer to all their Clamours against it that *God allows it*.

Further; As there is no Sin in this Practice if God allows it, so there is Sin in forbidding it: 'tis to forbid what he has not forbidden, to add to the word of God the Rule of Faith and Practice; 'tis to add a Negative Command to the Commands of God.

Further; If God allows this it ought to be done: Because Charity and the Love we owe to our Infants, obliges us to do all we can to secure their Salvation. And this is all that we can do in Case of their dying in Infancy. This if God allows it does certainly put them, while Infants, and till they come to know and chuse and act for themselves into a State of Salvation, and that every Man must need do for his Child if he can.

A
Vindication of the CHURCH
IN THE
BAPTISING
OF
INFANTS.


The SECOND PART.

Being a Proposal of some of the Particular Texts of Holy Scripture, from whence this may be Justified.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Text in *John* 3. 5. is explain'd and improv'd to our Purpose: *Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

IT is the Doctrine of the Church of *England* in the Sixth Article of Religion profess'd by it, That the Books which we call the Holy Scriptures *do contain all things necessary to Salvation*, So that whatever is not read there-



therein, nor may be prov'd thereby, is not to be requir'd of any Man that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation. And all the Rest of the Articles of Religion which our Church holds, and obliges her Ministers to hold and teach, are framed according to this Rule. They lay down nothing to be believed as an Article of Faith, and urge nothing to be done as Necessary to Salvation, but what is contain'd in the Holy Scriptures, and may either be read therein, or be proved thereby. By this difference of Expression concerning what we are oblig'd by Holy Scripture to believe and do, that it must be either read in Scripture or prov'd by it, is meant, that we are to look upon that Doctrine or Duty as contain'd in Scripture, and as what we are oblig'd to believe and submit to, which follows by a just and necessary consequence from what is read there, and is necessarily in the Nature of the thing connected and joyned with it: And this without doubt is true. Upon this Ground it is that our Church says in the 27th Article; The Baptism of Infants is in any wise to be retain'd in the Church as most agreeable with the Institution of Jesus Christ. Our Church looks upon this Practice as what may be justified and vindicated from Holy Scripture, as did the first and purest Ages of Christianity, tho some of the Papists, and this new Sect of the Anabaptists, in these latter times of great Corruption endeavour to maintain the contrary.

To make it evident that the Baptising of Infants may be Justified and Vindicated from the Holy Scriptures; I have, in the former Part of this Book, given a Brief and Summary account of the main Subject and Scope of Holy Scripture; Which is to discover to Mankind their need of Salvation, to reveal and propose to them the great and kind Saviour who is allow'd them, and to direct and prescribe in what Way and Method all must partake of Salvation by him. And I think I have made it sufficiently appear that it is connected with those Matters, and follows necessarily from them, that

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the Baptising of Infants is both lawful and allow'd by Almighty God, and what ought to be done when it may be. And if this be done then I may be reckon'd to have vindicated this Practice not from some one particular Text or two, that is dark and obscure, and capable of another Interpretation, but, as may be said, from the whole Scriptures, in that it is vindicated from the general Subject and Scope of it. And this is the best Vindication that any controverted Doctrine or Duty can receive, and I should not need to proceed any further in this endeavour if it were not that we have to do with People in this Controversy, who are for the most part incapable of apprehending the force of this Way of proving the Truth, and who, as they commonly require, so they need for their better Conviction, that some particular Texts of Scripture should be produced and improved to this Purpose. I shall therefore now produce some of those particular Texts from which this Practice of the Church of Christ may be vindicated; And in treating on them, I shall endeavour to make it appear, that those Interpretations of them which I insist upon and use, be such as do exactly agree with what has been represented, as the general Tenour and Scope of the Scriptures: For most certainly such Interpretations of any particular Texts, as make them disagree with the general Design and Scope of the whole, must needs be false, because they impute to the Wise and Infallible Spirit of God, the Folly and Mistake of contradicting himself; and this is the constant Disadvantage and Disparagement of all the Interpretations of Holy Scripture which the Adversaries of Infant Baptism make use of against it, as will in part be made manifest by the following Discourses.

The First Text I shall consider and use to justify the Baptising of Infants, is in *John 3. 5*. Where our Saviour says to *Nicodemus*, with a double Asseveration, to give his Words the more Force, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot*

cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. to make it appear that these Words do Justify and Vindicate our Baptizing of Infants; it will be necessary that I do first produce and vindicate the right Interpretation of them; And then I may show particularly how they are serviceable to our purpose, and do vindicate this Practice of the Church of God.

To come at a right Understanding of these Words, we must enquire and see what our Saviour must be understood to mean by the *Kingdom of God* here; and then, what he means by saying, Every one must be *born of Water, and of the Spirit*, as necessary, and in order to their entering into it.

We will first learn by considering the use of this Expression in other places of Scripture, What our Saviour must be understood to mean by this Phrase *the Kingdom of God* here. To which purpose we may observe that these two Phrases, *The Kingdom of God*, and *the Kingdom of Heaven*, are used promiscuously in Scripture, and so do both mean the same thing. Again, By what the Scripture speaks of the Kingdom of God, or of Heaven, we may observe, that there is a Kingdom of God on Earth, and there is a Kingdom of God in Heaven; or that the Kingdom of God is partly on Earth, and partly in Heaven. That there is a Kingdom of God on Earth appears by the Business of St. John the Baptist's Preaching, which was to tell the People that the *Kingdom of God*, or of Heaven *was at Hand*, Mat. 3. 2. He must of necessity be understood in this to mean a Kingdom of God on Earth with this meaning of the Expression our Saviour also sent forth his Seventy Disciples, to preach about among the People of the Jews, and say *the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Mat. 10. 7. Which charge St. Luke relating, speaks it thus, say unto them *the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you*. There are other places of Scripture which tell us of a Kingdom of God in Heaven, and which confine the meaning of the Phrase to

that Sense. Thus it must be understood in *Luke* 13. 28, 29. where we see our Saviour telling those he was speaking to, That at the Day of Judgment they who should be condemn'd to depart from him as workers of Iniquity, should see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the kingdom of God, and they themselves thrust out: And that many should come from the East, West, North, and South, and sit down in the kingdom of God. In this Sense the Apostle uses it when speaking of the Resurrection, and of the Change which shall be then made in the Bodies of all those who shall be advanced to the Happiness of Heaven, he says, *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 15. 20. and when of several sorts of Sinners he says, they shall not inherit the kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 21. In this Sense of it the Disciples seem to have understood our Saviour in *Luke* 18. 24, 25, 26. He had said, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God? And it is easier for a Camel to go thorow a Needles eye, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.* And they that heard it said, *who then can be sav'd?* Now if there be a Kingdom of God on Earth, and a Kingdom of God in Heaven, or this Kingdom be partly on Earth, and partly in Heaven; the meaning of this must be, that the Kingdom of God as it is on Earth, must mean the Church of Christ; And when *John* the Baptist, and the seventy Disciples preach'd that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, they meant that State of Religion, or Dispensation of the New Covenant which should be set up in the Days of the Messiah; they meant the Church of Christ. And the Kingdom of God in Heaven must mean the State of final and consummate Blessedness in the perfect Enjoyment of God which the Saints shall attain after the Resurrection and the final Judgment. That the Kingdom of God as it is on Earth since the coming of the Messiah, is no other than the Church of Christ, a late Eminent Divine of our Church has made appear by the following Scriptures, *Mat.* 16.

18, 19. *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* And thus, to be *translated into the kingdom of Christ* (says he) *Col. 1. 13. and call'd to the kingdom of Christ,* 1 Thess. 2. 12. imports no more then to be made a Member of the Church of Christ. And thus also by *the kingdom of God*, in *Mat. 13. 38. by the kingdom of God*, *Mat. 21. 31. by the kingdom of heaven*, *Mat. 11. 12. and by the kingdom of Christ*, *Rev. 11. 15.* no other thing can be intended but only the Church of Christ. (Dr. Scott's Christian Life, Part 2. Vol. 2d. Sect. 9.) And it is very significant and proper to give thus the same Name to these two States, because the one is the way to the other, or they may be said to be as two Parts of the same Building. The Church is as a more outward Room or Court, and Heaven the more inward one as the Chamber of Presence; And one is the way to the other, as in the Jewish Temple, the way to the most Holy was through the Holy Place. The Church of God on Earth is part of the Church of God in Heaven, they are both the same Church, the same Body of Men who are incorporated into Christ, are join'd in that Body of which he is the Saviour and the Head; and we must come into the Church in Heaven in the ordinary and appointed way, by being entred into the Church on Earth. And being entred into the Kingdom of God as on Earth, we may be said to be in a State of Salvation, to be in that State to which the Happiness of Heaven, or the Kingdom of God, as it is in Heaven does of Right belong. Now we must understand that this Phrase in the Place under present Consideration is limited to the final and consummate Happiness of Heaven, or to the Kingdom of God, as it is there. It is limited to that, by what our Saviour says is necessary to all Men for their entring into it, which must be understood to be had before their entring, and to be the means and way of their coming to it: this will appear by what follows next.

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Let us next consider what he means by being born of the Spirit here ; which he is generally and without Controversy understood to make necessary to our entering into the Kingdom of God. And we shall grant what is own'd on all Hands, that by being born of the Spirit means the having our Natures cleansed and sanctified from the Pollution of Sin, by the Operation of the Holy Spirit of God ; it means what the Apostle does by saying, *he that is in Christ is a new Creature* ; that we must be created again in Christ Jesus unto good Works, or be transformed by the renewing of our Minds. Our Nature must be chang'd, tho' not in its essentials, yet in its prevailing Biass, as we may say, or Inclinations ; it must be changed from bad to good, from sinful to holy, must be by the Spirit of God consecrated to God, dispos'd to live to him, and to honour and acknowledge him as we ought. Now this change of our Nature is commonly enough represented in Scripture as necessary to our final and consummate Happiness ; this is meant when 'tis said, without *Holiness no man shall see God*, and I need not stay to prove this. It is then agreeable with the rest of Holy Scripture to say, *A man must be born of the spirit*, to enter into the Kingdom of God in this sense. And when this is said to be necessary to our entering into the Kingdom of God, it confines and limits the meaning of the Phrase to this Sense ; it cannot mean here then the Kingdom of God as it is on Earth, or a State of Salvation, that State which has a Right to the final and compleat Salvation and Happiness. Our Saviour evidently speaks of this here, as what is necessary to enter Men into the Kingdom of God, and then he speaks of it as what must go before their entering, and must bring them into it : But to be born of the Spirit cannot be said to go before a Man's entering into a State of Salvation, nor therefore to be necessary to this entering into it ; For he that is born of the Spirit is in a State of Salvation ; he is in that State to which the final and

consummate Happiness does belong, therefore it cannot be said a Man must be born of the Spirit in order to his entring into that State, or as that which is necessary to bring him into it: Because this were to say, he must be in it to enter into it, and certainly we must not understand our Saviour as speaking so. To be Born of the Spirit is that what which does attend or accompany a State of Salvation, but does not introduce or bring Men to it, 'tis a Priviledge enjoy'd in that State, not a thing that admits to it: And to say we must enjoy what belongs to that State to enter or bring us into it, were to say we must be in it before we be in it. We cannot be said to enjoy what belongs to that State without being in it; and then we cannot be requir'd to have what belongs to it to bring us into it, because that were to require us to be in it that we might be in it, or as necessary in order, or as the way to be in it. 'Tis true no Man has Right to Heaven but he that is in some measure sanctified or born of the Spirit; but as it is not by his Sanctification that he has Right to Heaven, so it cannot be said he must be sanctified in order to come to, or to enter upon a Right to Heaven; for this Sanctification is somewhat of that he gains by coming into that State which has a Right to Heaven, it is one of the Priviledges conferr'd in that State, but does not admit Men to it, they must be some other way admitted to it. We must understand that a State of Salvation is entred into by entring into the New Covenant, by engaging in the appointed solemn way to Purity and Holiness of Life, and this Sanctification is one of the Favours of the New Covenant which is promis'd and granted on God's part to those who are in Covenant, but must not be said to bring Men into the Covenant. This is necessary in order to our perfect Happiness, as what must go before and bring us into the Possession of that, but not as what must go before, and bring us into the State which has a Right to that. It is necessary then, and requir'd to

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our entring into the Kingdom of God in Heaven, but not necessary nor requir'd to our entring into the Kingdom of God as it is on Earth. And therefore when our Saviour makes it necessary to our entring into the Kingdom of God, he means the Kingdom of God as in Heaven, or to our final and compleat Happiness.

I come now to consider the other thing express'd by our Saviour as necessary and requir'd in order to our entring into the Kingdom of Heaven, or obtaining the final and compleat Happiness of Mankind, if indeed there be another thing requir'd here, and it be not the same thing taken notice of before; that is, the *being born of the Spirit*, but express'd under another Phrase, which is the *being born of water*. The meaning of this Expression here is a Matter controverted in these latter Times, while some do acknowledge and hold, that the Sacrament of Baptism is spoken of by our Saviour here under the Phrase of being born of Water; and some endeavour to maintain on the contrary, that nothing is requir'd in this Text as necessary to Salvation, but to be born of the Spirit. The Followers of the New Divinity which has bred and encouraged those many unhappy Sects among us that do disparage, and divide and weaken the Reformation, and hinder its Progress, and threaten the overthrow of it, do obstinately deny that the Sacrament of Baptism is intended here, and the Sect herein oppos'd do follow them in it. I shall insist a little upon this Matter, because it is of great Importance in this Controversy, and shall vindicate the old and true Interpretation of this Text.

The Church of *England*, guided I doubt not by that Divine Spirit, whose Gifts abounded in the first and purest Ages of Christianity in all her Doctrines, and the Practices establish'd, and built upon them, does, in Conformity to the Primitive Church, manifestly understand these Words, as spoken of the Sacrament of Baptism. This appears in the Office Ap-

pointed to be used in the publick Baptising of Infants, in the Exhortation which begins it. But it is more fully express'd and manifested in that which is appointed for the Baptising of grown Persons, which I shall therefore have recourse to on this Occasion. In that Office we have this place of Scripture appointed to be read as a Portion of the Gospel suitable to the Occasion: And in the Exhortation following it is said, *Beloved, ye hear in this Gospel the words of our Saviour Christ; That except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Whereby ye may perceive the great Necessity of this Sacrament* (meaning baptism) *where it may be had.* This evidently enough shows that 'tis the Sense of our Church that these Words of our Saviour are spoken concerning the Sacrament of Baptism, and that they make it ordinarily necessary to Salvation: As the Church elsewhere says of both Baptism and the Lord's Supper, that they are *generally necessary to Salvation.* This is our Churches Interpretation of this Scripture, and I shall make it appear we have good reason to receive this, rather than that of any other Modern Divines.

I doubt not to say, we have good Reason for this, in that we find this Interpretation of this Scripture in the Christian Church from the beginning, and it is recommended to us by the common Agreement of the first Ages of Christianity therein. It is evident enough that St. *Justin* the Martyr understood this Text, as speaking of the Sacrament of Baptism, by his Manner of using the third Verse of this Chapter, which he brings in as a Precept for Baptism, and because he speaks of Regeneration as conferred in Baptism; His Words are these, "But after what Manner
" we are devoted to God, being renewed by Christ,
" we shall now represent. Whoever are perswaded
" of, and do believe, those things to be true, which
" are delivered by us, and will take upon them to live
" accordingly, they are taught to Pray with Fasting,
" and

“and to beg of God the Remission of former Sins,
 “we also Praying and Fasting together with them.
 “After which they are brought by us where is
 “Water, and they are Regenerated by the same
 “way, in which we our selves have been regenerated,
 “for they are then washed with Water; For Christ
 “hath said, *Unless ye be born again ye shall not enter into*
 “*the Kingdom of Heaven.* (*Apol. 2do*) Tertullian also
 does manifestly allow this Sacrament to be spoken of
 here, in Chap. 39. of his Book on the Soul. Where
 he mentions this as our Lord’s definition concerning
 Baptism, *that Unless one be born of Water and of the Spi-*
rit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. We see
 again the excellent St. Cyprian understanding it thus
 in several places of his Works. In his Ep. 72. (*ad*
Oxon.) speaking concerning those who had been Bap-
 tised by some Hereticks, and urging that they ought
 to be Baptised by the Church, as well as to have Im-
 position of Hands afforded them, when they would
 joyn themselves to the Church, he says, Then may
 they be fully Sanctified, and be Sons of God, if they
 be born of both Sacraments, for as much as it is writ-
 ten, *Unless one be born of Water and of the Spirit, he can-*
not enter into the Kingdom of God. In his 73. Ep. (*Ib.*)
 He says they ought to be Baptised who would be fit for
 the Church, when they come out of Heresy, and should
 be born of both Sacraments, because ’tis written, *Un-*
less one be born of Water, &c. In his account of a Coun-
 cil at *Carthage*, wherein were 87 Bishops assembled,
 He represents it as the Sense of that Council, that this
 Text of Scripture speaks of the Sacrament of Baptism.
 “In the Gospel (say they) our Lord Jesus Christ,
 “with his Divine Voice, hath spoke saying, *Unless*
 “*one be born of Water, &c.* This is the Spirit (say
 “they) who from the beginning, mov’d upon the
 “Waters, alluding to what is said of the Creation in
 “*Gen. 1.* For neither can the Spirit work without the
 “Water, nor the Water without the Spirit. It is a mi-

"stake then in some to think that by imposition of
 "hands they may receive the Holy Spirit, and be
 "thereby received into the Church, when 'tis mani-
 "fest that by both Sacraments they ought to be rege-
 "nerated in the Catholick Church. It considerably
 proves that the Primitive Church did unanimously In-
 terpret this Text as speaking of Baptism, That we
 find the Pelagians themselves confess'd this, tho' it
 would have been very serviceable to their Defence to
 have denied it if they could. Against their Denial of
 any Sin in Infants, the necessity of Baptism to such
 was urg'd by their Opposers, and it was prov'd from
 the Tradition and constant Practice of the Church in
 the Baptising of Infants, and from this Text in St.
John, They could neither deny that the Church did
 constantly Baptise Infants, nor that Baptism was not
 mention'd and commanded in this place of Scripture,
 and made necessary by our Saviour to all Persons for
 their entring into the Kingdom of God. But that
 they might still evade the force of this Scripture, and
 not acknowledge the Doctrine of Original Sin; since
 they could not believe that Infants dying such, could
 be cast away from the Divine Favour for ever, with-
 out any Guilt or Pollution, they put themselves to this
 poor Shift to defend themselves: They invented a Di-
 stinction between the Kingdom of God and some other
 sort of Blessedness which they call Salvation, or Eter-
 nal Life; That they might yield to our Saviour's
 Words here, that Infants dying unbaptised should not
 enter into the Kingdom of God, and yet might at
 the same time maintain that they should not fail of be-
 ing sav'd, and of Inheriting Eternal Life. The Di-
 vines of the *Augustan* Confession, which we common-
 ly call the *Lutheran* part of the Reformation, do pe-
 remptorily assert that this Scripture ought to be un-
 derstood of the Sacrament of Baptism; and in argu-
 ing for this they say, among other things, That the
 Ancient Church did Unanimously understand these

Words

Words of our Saviour concerning this Sacrament. Thus *Chereminius* speaks in his Harmony upon the place; and *Gerrard* (in loc. de Baptismo.) And *Vossius* who was one of the most learned of those on the other side who would Impose their new Interpretation on the Church does confess as much, I find him quoted saying; The Principal of the Three effects of Baptism is, That it regenerates Mankind, as all Antiquity believ'd, being perswaded of this by those Words of our Saviour, *John 3. 5. Unless one be born of Water, &c.* (*Arnauld Renvers.*) Thus our Church in this Interpretation of these Words has the Primitive Christian Church, and those of the best reform'd Churches beyond the Seas on its side.

But this is not all the Reason we have to Interpret this Scripture thus; Tho' it is somewhat that is worthy to be regarded, and is a Humane Authority which may justly Antidote any such on the other side, and prevail against it, and is for that reason produced. I shall further justify the understanding these Words as speaking of Baptism, and I doubt not Sufficiently, from the Holy Scripture it self: Which may be done, From the Circumstances of this Discourse of our Saviour, From the Connexion of these Words, From those Scriptures which ascribe it to this Sacrament to bring Men into the Kingdom of God, as that is on Earth, and from those Texts of Scripture which ascribe it to Baptism, to confer and bestow what is meant by the New Birth, or which intimate this to be given in and with this Sacrament.

If we consider the Circumstances of this Discourse, we shall see Reason to believe that the Baptism of our Saviour was instituted and put in Practice before our Saviour held this Discourse with *Nicodemus*, and this may justly induce us to believe he spoke of it, then, to him, under this Phrase of being born of Water. It was notorious that our Saviour made and gathered Disciples before this, and was come to the Knowledge of the Rulers. And since we find after this that he

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Baptised those whom he took into the Number of his Disciples, we cannot doubt but he used this Method to the first, and from the beginning of his gathering Disciples. And to confirm us in this belief, we may observe that Baptising and making Disciples are two Expressions, which are put together, as signifying the same thing, and as intimating that the receiving Men Disciples was done in and by Baptising them, this was the Rite and Ceremony of entring them Disciples: for 'tis said, *John 4. 1. Jesus made and baptised more Disciples than John*; that is, Jesus made or received them for his Disciples by Baptising them. We are told in *vers. 22, and 26. of this 3d Chapter*, that Jesus himself did Baptise, which we may believe he did at his first gathering of his Disciples, tho' this is said after the relation of his Discourse with *Nicodemus*. If he Baptised after this, we cannot doubt but he did so before, since 'tis evident he gather'd Disciples before. And when 'tis said in the *2d Verse of the 4th Chapter*, *That Jesus himself baptised not, but his Disciples*: We must understand no more is meant by it than this, That he had at that time ceased to administer this Sacrament himself, the Multitudes being now greater that came to his Baptism than one Man could attend to Baptise, for they were more than had come to *John the Baptist*: therefore now he did this Work by those who were already Disciples, and applied himself only to preaching the necessary Doctrines of the Gospel. Besides, We must needs believe that those Disciples whom he employ'd to Baptise the Multitudes, had been themselves Baptised: We must believe that all Persons were admitted his Disciples in the same way. The People we may think could not have been satisfied to receive their Baptism of those who had not been themselves Baptised, nor could have thought it necessary to be Baptised, or in this way admitted into the Number of Disciples to the Messias, if any of that Number had not been Baptised. It is not suitable to

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our Saviour to believe he instituted this way of entering into the Kingdom of God for some, and not for all. Therefore since he evidently appointed this way of Admission for some, we may believe he appointed it for all, and then that he might speak of it as commonly necessary to Salvation: And since he did practice it himself after his Discourse with *Nicodemus*, and, when it was too much for him to perform it himself alone, he did commit it to his Disciples, and continue it by them; and therefore we have Reason to believe his Baptism was instituted and practiced before his Discourse with *Nicodemus*, as it is certain he had gathered Disciples before, we have thence good Reason to believe that he spoke these Words to this Man concerning it, and has herein established the common necessity of it to Salvation.

But we have yet further reason to believe this from the Connexion of these Words in this Discourse with *Nicodemus*. This Man came to Jesus, possess'd with an Opinion that he was *a Teacher come from God*, as we see in *ver. 2*. He therefore came to him, without doubt, to be instructed what he must do to secure to himself the everlasting favour of God. And because the Nation of the Jews were at this time in a great Expectation of the Messiah, and that his coming was at hand, we may suppose he thought, that either Jesus was the Person, or that he could tell him where he was, or when he would come. Our Lord sets himself most certainly to give the Man that Instruction which he knew he wanted most. His first Words to him that are related, we have in *ver. 3*. *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* The Man wondred at these Words, and seems not to have understood any other Birth but a natural one, and therefore said to our Saviour in *ver. 4*. *How can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his Mothers Womb and be Born?* And he might think it enough to have his natural Birth from

from the Nation of *Israel*, to entitle him to all the Favours of the Days of the Messiah. Our Saviour answer this his Question in the Words of the Text which is under our present Consideration, and in the Verses that follow it ; where he lets him know that he speaks of another sort of Birth then the natural one, and tells him how, and in what way, or by whom it must be effected, and brought to pass. He tells him in this Text, Men must be born of Water and of the Spirit to be sav'd ; and lets him know in the 6th *ver.* that a change of Nature is the Birth which he speaks of, a change from Flesh to Spirit, from Carnal and Earthly Inclinations to Spiritual and Holy ones ; and this Change must be wrought in Men by the Spirit of God, using the Application of Water to them to that Purpose : And this Change thus conferr'd, he would have him know was necessary and required to the partaking of that Salvation and Happiness which the Messiah came to bestow. *Nicodemus* still continued his wonder at this Doctrine, and said to our Saviour in *ver.* 9. *How can these things be ?* And gave our Saviour Occasion to reprove him as he does in *ver.* 10. and say, *Art thou a Master in Israel, and knowest not these Things ?* Which plainly Intimates that he as a Master in *Israel*, as one who should be well acquainted with the Religion of his Nation, and who should well understand the true meaning and significancy of all the Rites and Usages which belonged to it, and the Doctrine of the Law and the Prophets, ought to have understood him. And then we may from hence conclude that an Inward and Spiritual Purity was always required of Men as necessary to their Salvation, and Favour with God, that it was required under the Law as well as under the Gospel, and therefore *Nicodemus* ought not to have wondred at our Saviour for signifying the Necessity of this : And we may believe that the engaging to this on Man's part, and the conferring it on God's part was of old perform'd in and with the Right of washing

ing the Body with Water; and this being an old Rite of true Religion, and what the Jewish Nation were acquainted with as such, *Nicodemus* ought not to wonder at what our Saviour said concerning it to this purpose. Further, When it was the Design and Scope of our Saviour's Discourse to let him know that such an inward Purity was still required, and must be engag'd on Man's Part, and bestow'd on God's in the Sacrament of Baptism, to make Men Partakers of the Favour which the Messiah came to bestow, All this was Intimation that the Kingdom of God which should come with the Messiah, was to be chiefly Spiritual, to administer Spiritual Favours, and to be entred into after a Spiritual Manner, and that his main Business was to advance Men to a State of Perfect and Eternal Happiness in another World, not to raise the Nation of the Jews to a great deal of worldly Pomp and Grandeur in this, and these things he did not understand but ought to have done it, as a Master in *Israel*. This I doubt not is a true account of the several Parts of this Discourse, and this does also justify the understanding our Saviour, as speaking these words of the Sacrament of Baptism, especially if it be taken and consider'd together, with what has been said already to this Purpose, and with what is to follow.

It justifies further the Interpreting these Words as spoken of Baptism, That the Holy Scripture often ascribes it to this Sacrament, to enter, or bring Men into the Kingdom of God as that is on Earth: for as much as that is the ordinary way of coming to the Kingdom of God as it is in Heaven, this Sacrament enters Men into the New Covenant, and that sure is to bring them into the Kingdom of God: It engages them to the Duties of it, and entitles them to the Blessings and Favours. One Text will suffice to show us this, which may be 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. where the Apostle says, *Baptism saves us*, as it is the answer of a good Conscience towards God. If it saves us, it entitles to the
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favours of the new Covenant; If it be the Answer or Engagement of a Good Conscience towards God, it engages to the Duties of the new Covenant which are requir'd on our part; and I need not prove that to be in this State, is to be entred into the Kingdom of God as that is on Earth. Again, Baptism is said to unite Men to Christ and to his Church, which certainly is to bring them into the Kingdom of God on Earth. The Apostle says, *Gal. 3. 27.* the Christians had been *Baptised into Christ*, and in *1 Cor. 12. 13.* *By one Spirit we are all Baptised into one Body*, that is the Body of Christ which is the Church. 'Tis true this is said to be done by the Spirit there, and he we must own is the Principal and Efficient Cause of this Translation, or removing Men from the first *Adam* to the second, and of bringing us to partake with the second; but this Sacrament is the Instrument and Means, this is the Ordinance in and by which he does it, as the Apostle intimates in saying, we are by him *Baptised into one Body*. That this admits Men into the Church is signified in *Acts 2. 41.* Where 'tis said, *They that gladly receiv'd the word were baptised, and added unto them*, that is to the Apostles, and other Disciples, who were the beginning of the Church of Christ. Now if this Sacrament is said in Scripture to unite and enter Men into the Church of Christ, which is certainly the Kingdom of God as that is on Earth, our Saviour may very justly be understood to speak of it under the Phrase of being born of Water, when he makes that necessary to our entrance into the Kingdom of God as it is in Heaven: Because the Church is the way to Heaven, it is a Part or Branch, we may say; of the same Kingdom: This is that Body of which Christ is the Saviour and the Head, and then we must be united to this Body to be sav'd by him, to come into a State of Salvation now, or to have a Right to it, and to obtain it compleat and perfect hereafter.

Further, we have Ground given us in the Holy Scriptures elsewhere to interpret our Saviour as speaking these Words of the Sacrament of Baptism, in that we see what is meant by the New Birth, of which our Saviour speaks here, ascrib'd to Baptism as what is conferr'd in the Administration of that Sacrament. It is according to Institution, and the Design of God in the Appointment of this Sacrament, that it should be, as we may say, a regenerating Ordinance: It is appointed, and has been used, not only as an Engagement on our Part to Holiness and Purity of Heart and Life, but also as an Engagement on God's part to bestow that Holiness to sanctify and renew Men as the Scripture speaks by the Holy Ghost. We have several things in Scripture which give us good Ground to speak thus of this Sacrament. It is a good Ground to say this, that this Sacrament is represented there as a Rite of entering into Covenant with God, of devoting our selves to serve and honour him; such it was from the first mention that we find of it, as such it was used by *Jacob's* Family, and by the whole Nation of *Israel* at Mount *Sinia*, and was used as such at both these Times as we may believe by God's Order and Command. The Prophet *Isaiah* plainly alludes to it as such, and intimates it was so used in his time when urging the People of the Jews to reform and forsake the Corruptions which were got in among them, he speaks his Exhortation in these Words. *Wash ye, make ye clean; put away the evil of your doings,* (*Isa. i. 16.*) which may mean renew this Sacrament, or take it if it has been neglected, and therein renew and strengthen your Engagement to live well and honour God. But this Engagement to God certainly entitles, as hath been said, to the Favours of the new Covenant on God's part, of which this is one; and perhaps we may reckon 'tis not only Forgiveness or Remission of the Sins of *Israel*, but their Sanctification too, or the inward Cleansing them by the Spirit, which that Prophet

phet promises soon after those Words, if they would renew and strengthen this Engagement, when he adds, *ver. 18. in the Name of God, Tho' your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, tho' they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* It was ever a Favour of the New Covenant we may reckon, and that which was design'd to attend Men's Engagement or entrance into that Covenant, and to be conferr'd in and with the Sacrament which entred them into it, when we find it promised to the Circumcised People, and in a such Phrase as signifies it should be bestow'd in and with their Circumcision. Thus *Moses* speaks, *Deut. 30. 6. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy Soul that thou maiest live.* But if this has been we may believe it is still to be, and that this Renovation is afforded and conferr'd in and with the Sacrament of Baptism.

Again, That this Renovation or Sanctification which is the New Birth, is according to the Appointment and Design of God ordinarily conferr'd in and with this Sacrament we have good Ground to believe from those Scriptures wherein the Promise of it is joyn'd with Phrases expressing the Application of Water to those Persons to whom it is promised; and also from those Scriptures where the actual bestowing of it is joyn'd with Expressions signifying the Application of Water to them who had receiv'd it; there are several Texts of both these sorts which we may take notice of. It is joyn'd in promise with Expressions of applying Water to those who should receive it in *Isa. 44. 3. I will pour Water upon him that is Thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my blessing upon thine Off-spring.* Another like Text we have *Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: From all your Filthiness, and from your Idols will I cleanse you. A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put into you;*

you; *And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.* It is also join'd in the Performance, and when 'tis said that it has been given together with such Expressions: Thus the Apostle speaks to some that had been converted to a good Life, and says, *ye are wash'd ye are sanctified.* Again in *Eph. 5. 26.* he says, *Christ does sanctify and cleanse his Church with the washing of water by the word;* where we may understand the *Word* means the Word of Command or Institution which has appointed this Sacrament. Again the Apostle says, *According to his mercy he sav'd us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy ghost,* *Tit. 3. 5.* And in *Heb. 10. 22.* he speaks of Christians as having their *hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies wash'd with pure water,* if that place must not be understood as an Exhortation to those that were delaying in the New Birth to take this Sacrament. Now when the Scripture so often uses this way of Expressing, we may justly believe the Reason of it is because this Sacrament is appointed and used for the bestowing this Operation of the Holy Ghost. The Prophets might speak thus, not only as Prophecyng of Christian Baptism, as some think, but also because this was in their time the design'd inward Grace which attended this Religious Washing. And the New Testament may be reasonably understood to speak thus, because this effect was administred and afforded with the Christian Baptism: And we have the more reason to understand these Expressions so there, because they are all spoken of, or to those that were Baptised, and had receiv'd this Sacrament. We cannot reasonably think these things so often joyn'd together only because of the Resemblance between Water and the Spirit, or between the Effects in the Application of both. And as it seems a Perverseness to interpret all these Scriptures, as speaking only of the Gift and Operation of the Spirit, and not including the Sacrament of Baptism, so, like

what proceeds from the Spirit of Error, it has been Serviceable to Error, for it has apparently help'd to betray and lead the wretched Sect of the Quakers to their rejecting this Sacrament as not requir'd, and useless.

Lastly, We have good ground to say the Holy Scripture ascribes to this Sacrament the conferring of this New Birth, when we find Men directed to this Sacrament, as to that by which they should receive it; And this is so evidently done by the Apostle *Peter*, in his Discourse to the Jews in *Act. 2. 38.* That I shall not stay to look for any other Scripture which speaks to this Purpose. He bids them there Repent, and be Baptised, and says, *they should then receive remission of their sins, and the gift of the holy ghost*, he plainly exhorts them to Baptism as a means and method to receive this.

Now from all these things we are abundantly justified in the Interpreting these words of our Saviour as spoken of Baptism. We may reasonably believe, that he in his joyning Water and Spirit intimates the Spirit to be afforded in the Sacrament of Baptism; and that he makes the Sacrament of Baptism ordinarily necessary to Salvation here, as well as the Sanctification of the Spirit, when he says, *Unless one be born of water, and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* And he may the rather be understood to do this here, when he does it elsewhere; As in *Mark 16. 16.* he says, *he that believes, and is baptised, shall be sav'd.* Tho' the Graces wrought in the new Birth are the Conditions of the Covenant, yet the Sacrament is that whereby we are entred into the Covenant, and so must come to be sav'd upon such condescending Terms as are now establish'd.

And it may justly confirm us in this Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures in this Case, that we may find the Church of God has been wont to understand of this Sacrament as we do, and to reckon that as it was a

solemn

Solemn Engagement to Purity and Holiness on Man's part, it was also an Ordinance in and by which it was conferr'd on God's part. It is evident that *Justin Martyr* in the place before referr'd to, speaks of Persons as Regenerated in their taking of Baptism. *Irenaeus* (*adv. Heres.* 1. 3. c. 19.) says, our Lord committing the Power of Regeneration unto God, to his Disciples, said to them; *Go ye teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy ghost*; and after this he urges the Necessity of Baptism to Salvation. *Greg. Nazianzen* (*Orat.* 40.) speaks of it as Sanctifying even to Infants: *Hast thou an Infant* (says he) *let it be Sanctified in its Infancy*; which he speaks of Baptism. And of Infants again with relation to their Baptism, he says, *It is better to be Sanctified without a Sense of it than to depart, or die without Baptism*. Baptism, says he, *there consists of two Things, Water and Spirit, that receiv'd in a visible corporeal manner, this concurring in an invisible incorporeal manner, purging the inward Recesses of the Mind*. He says too, *That this Sacrament is a Covenant, or Engagement with God of a New Life, and more pure course of living*. And we call Baptism the laver of Regeneration, because it washes. He says, *The Holy Spirit is requisite to make Baptism compleat*. All this shows that Father's Sense of this matter the same which has been here maintain'd. To the same purpose we find the Blessed Martyr *St. Cyprian* speaking of Baptism. *He that is born is to be Baptised and Sanctified* (*Ep.* 64. *Ed.* Oxon.) *They who have been Sanctified by the Church's Baptism*. (*Ep.* 69. *Ib.*) Further we may observe, that in the Antient use of this Rite and Sacrament, there was a certain Ceremony usually joyn'd with it, which may be reckon'd design'd to signify both the Engagement to Purity and Holiness, and also the receiving this Gift of the Holy Ghost; and that was the changing, or putting on clean Garments, upon the taking of this Sacrament. This was done at the Baptism of *Jacob's Family* by his Order: This was done

too by the Nation of *Israel* when they were Baptised at Mount *Sinai*. And as this Ceremony attended the Antient use of this Sacrament in the old Religion of the World, so we find the first Christians continuing it in their use of Baptism; And this is known to have occasion'd the Name of *Whitsunday*: Which was given to that Day, because the new Baptised then appear'd in the Congregation in clean and white Garments.

To conclude this matter; The Sacrament of Baptism as the Scripture evidently tells us, is an Ordinance appointed to engage us in Covenant with God, or to Incorporate us into Christ. In doing this, it gives us a Right, as hath been said, to the Blessings and Favours of the Covenant of Grace; to Remission of Sins, to our Sanctification, and to eternal Life. Now such is the Goodness and Faithfulness of God, that we can no sooner obtain a Right to any Favour from God, but we shall be put into actual Possession of it, according as our Necessity requires, and as far as the Nature and State of things will allow. The Baptised Person then, who does not by any thing within himself hinder and obstruct his receiving Benefit by this Sacrament is immediately pardon'd, and receives a Measure of the Sanctifying Gift of the Holy Ghost, and if he dies in that State he takes Possession of Eternal Happiness. What is objected by the Adversaries against the Regeneration of Infants, shall be consider'd when I come to answer their Objections.

Having thus abundantly vindicated the Interpretation of this Scripture, as speaking of the Sacrament of Baptism, I come now to the Improvement of it which was propos'd, and to show how we may from hence justify the Baptising of Infants. And that which this Scripture chiefly serves for is, to establish the general Necessity of the Sacrament of Baptism in order to Salvation: It speaks this the ordinary appointed way and method of being sav'd. And then upon this ground we may thus argue for the Baptising of Infants.

1. If all must in an ordinary way be Baptised to be saved, then Infants must be so, but that is it which our Saviour does establish here. We must observe what is here requir'd, is requir'd in general Terms, 'tis requir'd of all, and that makes it necessary to all Persons. St. *Ambrose* observes upon the Place, That what is here establish'd, is establish'd for all: *Our Lord*, says he, *makes no Exception of any, no not of the Infant.* (De Abrah. Patr. l. 2. c. 11.) It must be particularly observ'd, for the Information of these mistaken People, who are impos'd upon by the Defenders of their Error, that the Word *Man* is not in the Words of our Saviour in this Text, and so the Expression is not such as to limit and confine it to grown Persons, as they are perswaded to believe it does. The Words of our Saviour express, that *no one shall enter into the kingdom of heaven unless he be born again, and born of water and the Spirit.* They might have been render'd to this Sense, and so as to express our Saviour's Mind thus, *Except one be born of water*, that is, every one. Our Saviour then, if he speaks of the Sacrament of Baptism here, does declare that this is ordinarily necessary to all Persons for Salvation, and therefore for Infants among others. This is not a Method and way of Salvation appointed for all, if any are excluded from it, and most certainly none are excluded if it be appointed for all, and then Infants are not excluded, because 'tis appointed for all. There would never have been an Appointment of a way of Salvation in so general Terms, if it had not been intended to include all: But our Saviour would expressly have excepted Infants from this way of Salvation, if it had been his Will that they should be excepted. We must certainly guide our selves by the Rule, and then since that takes in all, and excludes none, we must take all into this way of Salvation, and exclude none. These People require an express Command for the Baptising of Infants, and this may be given them as an express Command for it. The Words

are an exprefs Precept, making Baptifm the common Rite and Method of admitting all Persons into the Kingdom of God, therefore, fince Infants muft be included under all Persons, it is an exprefs Precept for their Baptifm in order to their Salvation. If it be exprefs for the Baptifing of any Persons, it is exprefs for them, becaufe it expreffes and includes all. Can it be faid it is not an exprefs Command or Eftablifhment of Baptifm for them, becaufe they are not particularly mention'd? Then it may be faid, it is not an exprefs Eftablifhment for the Baptifing of Men, nor of Women, becaufe they are not expreffly mention'd; and this were to interpret a Command for the Baptifing of all, as if it requir'd to Baptife none. Thefe People might exclude any others as well as Infants from the reach of this Precept with the fame Reason, that they are not particularly mention'd. And therefore they have no other way to evade the Force of this Scripture, but by denying that it fpeaks of this Sacrament. And their Error is countenanced and affifted by thofe who furnifh them with Pretences for this. But it fhould be obferv'd that they expofe themfelves to the Condemnation of the Quakers, while they deny this Scripture to fpeak of Baptifm, for they have not an exprefs Appointment of Baptifing at all with Water in all the New Testament, if they have it not here; And then they muft either be determin'd by what may be juftified by Confequence from Scripture, or leave off their Baptifing. This is then an exprefs Command for Baptifing of Infants, if it be an exprefs Command for Baptifing at all; 'tis here expreffly requir'd of all that they be Baptifed in order to Salvation, therefore 'tis expreffly requir'd that Infants be Baptifed in order to their Salvation.

2. We may argue thus from this Scripture to juftify the Baptifing of Infants: All muft be born again to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, then Infants muft be fo to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

ven. And all must be born of Water and of the Spirit to be born again, therefore Infants must be so born again. Baptism is establish'd here, as an ordinary means to administer the New Birth, or the Renovation or Sanctification of our Nature, and if this be necessary to Salvation, to all, as our Saviour says in the third Verse, then that is necessary to the Salvation of all, by the 5th ver. of the Chapter, and then both are necessary to Infants. If any have receiv'd the Gift of the Holy Ghost before they were Baptised, this does not make Baptism not necessary in an ordinary way to our obtaining it. If God has given, yet we may not expect it because he has not promised it. In appointing a way of obtaining his Favours, he does virtually include a Promise of bestowing them to those, who take that method to attain them, but to none else. If any have by the preaching of the Word receiv'd the Gift of the Holy Ghost, this does not make the Sacrament not ordinarily necessary to Salvation to those that cannot receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost by the preaching of the Word. Infants certainly cannot receive it by the Preaching of the Word, therefore they have no means to receive it by, but the Sacrament of Baptism. It must be given without any means to them, or not at all, if they are not Baptised: But 'tis to be fear'd it will not be given without means when there are means appointed for bestowing it, if they are not used. We can have no assurance that it will be given without any means, therefore every Parent ought to bring his Child to Baptism if he can, because he ought not needlessly to leave it in a State wherein he can have no assurance of its Salvation. This means is especially necessary to Infants, because they can use no other, and it is great Presumption to expect for them the Favour of God without means, when there is a mean appointed which they can have applied to them.

3. We may argue for the Baptising of Infants from this Text of Scripture thus: It is necessary for Salvation

tion to all Persons to be entred into the New Covenant, therefore 'tis necessary to Infants to be entred into the New Covenant. The New Covenant and the Kingdom of God is the same thing, therefore unless any could be sav'd without entring into the Kingdom of God, it is necessary for Salvation to all that they be entred into the New Covenant, and if it be necessary to all, 'tis necessary to Infants. And then the Sacrament of Baptism may be prov'd necessary to Infants thus; Baptism is necessary to all Persons to enter them into the New Covenant, therefore 'tis necessary to Infants to enter them into the New Covenant. Baptism is necessary to all Persons for this by Divine Appointment: Because we shall not be reckon'd ordinarily as entred into the New Covenant with God, till we have taken upon us the Engagement, which he requires of us, to perform on our part, the Duties and Conditions of the Covenant. We have no Right or Title to his Favour, and our Happiness, till we thus acknowledge and own his Title to our Homage and Duty. And since he has been pleas'd to appoint a Rite and Ceremony, in the use of which we are to take this Engagement upon us, we are certainly to come to a Right to his Mercy by taking this Engagement upon us in the use of that Rite and Ceremony, and by that. We are guilty of will-worship plainly if we pretend to take this Engagement upon us in any other way then by that Rite, while we neglect, or refuse the use of that, and may justly fear it would not be accepted with God. If God has accepted of this Engagement without this Ceremony and Rite, where it could not be had, or if it may be hoped he will do so in that Case, this does not make it not to be ordinarily necessary where it may be had.

If we have seen this Sacrament determin'd to be necessary to those who were actually possess'd with Qualifications to perform the Conditions of the Covenant, and who were capable to perform them that they
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might have Right to the Blessings of the Covenant, then it must be much rather necessary to those who cannot actually perform those Conditions, and therefore necessary to Infants; But it was judg'd necessary by St. Philip to the *Eunuch*, who made Profession of his Faith: It was thought necessary by St. Peter to the Jews, and by *Ananias* to *Saul*, who all appear'd to be Penitent: It was thought necessary by St. Peter, and the Brethren who accompanied him, to *Cornelius* and his Friends, after they had apparently receiv'd the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost. Now if it has been judg'd necessary to those that could actually perform the Conditions of the Covenant, and were in a Disposition to do it, was judg'd so by Apostles and Persons immediately guided by the Spirit of God, we may certainly conclude it is much rather necessary to those that cannot actually perform the Conditions of the Covenant. And in truth the common way of arguing, that Infants ought not to be Baptised, because they cannot actually perform the Conditions of the Covenant, if rightly understood, will appear to prove substantially, that Infants need to be Baptised, and then that they ought to be so if this be allow'd by God. There are but two things that we can upon any ground from Scripture say, do give Right to the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace; they are, the engaging to perform the Conditions of it, and the actual performing of those Conditions: There is no ground in Scripture to ascribe this to any third thing, according to the common appointed Method of Salvation: And then since Infants cannot have Right by actual Performance of the Conditions, they can have no Right at all unless that be gain'd by Engagement.

Infants may obtain a Right to the Blessings of the New Covenant by their Engagement to perform the Conditions of it, as we have seen prov'd before: But they can no other way come under that Engagement but in taking the Sacrament of Baptism, according to
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the common appointed Method of Salvation. A grown Person may come under this Engagement, in another way, and it may be accepted of God, where this way cannot be had, and was not neglected or refused; but an Infant has no other way but by taking the common appointed Rite and Ceremony of Engagement. This I think undeniably proves the Necessity of Baptism to Infants in an ordinary way, and then it proves they ought to be brought by the Parent, and to be admitted by the Minister and the Church to Baptism: Because they ought to be brought by the Parent, and admitted by the Minister and the Church, to what they need for their Salvation if it be allow'd them by God. And that this is allow'd them by God I have partly prov'd already, and shall further, and sufficiently, confirm it by the next Text of Scripture which I shall make use of to justify the Baptising of Infants. And if Baptism be necessary to Infants to their Salvation, and be allow'd by God, they are guilty of a Sin of Omission, who refuse or neglect to bring them to Baptism.

C H A P. II.

Wherein is explain'd and improv'd to the Justifying of the Baptism of Infants, the Text in *Mark. 10. 13, 14.*

And they brought Young Children to him that he should touch them, and his Disciples rebuked those that brought them :

But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little Children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of God.

THE Church of *England* in an honourable and just Conformity with the first and purest Ages of the Christian Church, understands and uses this Text of Holy Scripture as a very good Proof of the Lawfulness, and consequent Duty, of bringing the Infants of the Church to the Sacrament of Baptism. And it is without doubt guided by the Spirit of God, as the Primitive Church was, in this Interpretation and Use of it: which we may safely believe when we may see that it is not forced herein to any Contradiction to the rest of Holy Scripture, but does perfectly agree both with the general Scope and Design of it, and with other particular Texts.

To Vindicate and Justify the Baptising of Infants, as it may be done from this Text, I shall explain it first according to the Direction of other places of Holy Scripture; and then I shall observe what it affords to justify the Church of God in this Practice.

For a right understanding of the Text, I propose to consider the Particulars following.

It is said here, that some People, we know not who, brought Young Children to our Lord. They brought these Children to him, *St. Mark* says, *That he might touch*

touch them. St. *Matthew* relating the same Affair, somewhat more largely, says they did this, that he should *put his Hands on these Children and pray, Mat. 19. 13.* It does not appear that these Children were brought to our Lord for the cure of any bodily Weakness, or Distemper that they were under; there is not the least Intimation of this in the Relation of this Matter, by any of the Evangelists that mention it. Nor can it be thought that if this had been their Business, the Disciples would have rebuked or offered to hinder them from being brought to Christ, because the necessity of bringing them to him would have appear'd to them, and because they saw our Saviour so ready at all times to cure any Diseased Persons that came, or were brought to him for his help. These People then brought their Children, we cannot doubt that our Saviour by his Prayer might obtain for them, and by laying on of his Hands might confer and bestow on them some Spiritual Blessings. They must needs have been Believers themselves who brought these Children, for none else would have had such an esteem of our Saviour, as to think any Advantage could accrue to their Children, by the laying his Hands on them and praying over them. And if they believ'd him to be the Christ, they brought their Children to him as the Christ, that their Children might receive from him such Graces and Favours as the Messiah could confer upon Mankind.

We will observe in the next place that the Disciples were offended with the People who brought these young Children; 'tis said the Disciples rebuked those that brought them. It is not express'd upon what ground his Disciples did this, nor do we need to enquire after it; especially when it appears in the Text, that upon whatever Ground they did this, Jesus was much displeased with them for it, and it occasion'd him to say, *Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God.*

Here

Here is a command of our Saviour to his Disciples, to his Church; It is as it were doubled to give it the more force, and make it be the more regarded: *Suffer them to come to me* (says he) *and forbid them not.* We have reason, then, the rather to observe, and freely and impartially to consider what this Command of our Lord does import and mean, that so we may all of us, as far as we are concern'd, duly comply with it. That we may understand this rightly, I shall endeavour rightly to satisfy these three Enquiries. (1.) What little Children our Lord speaks of here, and must be understood to order, should be suffered to come to him, (2.) What may be his meaning, in his Order that such should be suffer'd to come to him. (3.) What his Reason for this Order imports, or what is his meaning in those Words, *For of such is the Kingdom of God.*

First, Let us see what Children these Words of our Saviour will give us leave to understand may be brought, and must be suffered to come to him. And if we may guide our selves by the significancy of the Original Word, which is here used, we may say Infants may be brought, and must be suffer'd to come to Christ. The Words used here does properly signifie a Child under the Age of seven Years: and it is applied (*Mat. 2. 11.*) to our Saviour when he was new born, and was found by the Shepherds in his Swadling Cloaths lying in the Manger at *Bethlehem*. It may be observ'd by those who understand the Greek Tongue, that *St. Luke* relating this Matter, uses another word for the little Children brought to our Saviour, which we Translate Infants, *Luke 18. 15.* And the word he uses does properly signify Childen in their Infant State, and we in another place Translate it by the Word Babes, as in *1 Pet. 2. 2.* So that here we see Babes were brought to Christ with his Allowance, and must be brought to him by his Command, and this condemns as Impudent and Wicked, that truly child-
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ish and silly Contempt of their Baptism which we must suffer from the Mouths of this Sect, under the Name of Baby-Baptism.

Further, We may understand from these Words, and the Circumstances of them, that he means them not only of these Babes or Infants which were now before him, but of others too: He means them of Infants in general, he would have any Infants be suffered to come to him. There is nothing in our Saviour's Words here, nor in the Circumstances of his speaking them, that should make us think he meant them only of these particular Infants; but the Words themselves and the Circumstances of his speaking them, oblige us to understand them in a larger meaning. The Words are, *Suffer the little Children to come unto me*: He does not say, Suffer these little Children to come, so as to give us any the least ground to think we might not understand him of any but these. And St. Luke in relating the same affair, tells us, (*Luke 18. 16.*) That Jesus called those that brought the Children to him, when he perceiv'd his Disciples would have kept them off: And when they were call'd to him with their Children, and had brought them to him, then he said, *Suffer the little Children to come unto me.* He could not then speak these Words of these Children which were now come to him. When he had called them, his Disciples did not oppose so evident a Declaration of his Will and Pleasure: there was then no need to say, Suffer these to come to me, or to say these Words with Relation to these Children. The Words thus spoken evidently related to others only, and not at all to these, for these were come to him. We must therefore look upon them as a general Rule and Command given to his Disciples, and in them to his Church: and that they do as much as say, Suffer Infants to be brought to me, and hinder not any that would bring them at any time hereafter.

Besides this, The Reason which our Lord gives for this his Command, shows that he intended it should reach to other Infants besides these, because that reaches to others beside these: His Reason plainly signifies, that any Infants may be admitted to come to him, who may be admitted into the Kingdom of God, and then since other Infants, without doubt, beside these, may be admitted into the Kingdom God, we must understand it his Command here, that others beside these should be suffered to come to him, and his Order is not confin'd to these before him. If this was a good Reason why any should come to him, as it must needs be, then it is a Reason why others beside these should come to him, because they may be admitted into the Kingdom of God. When the Adversaries of Infant Baptism do interpret these Words, *Of such is the Kingdom of God*, as signifying that any Infants may be sav'd tho' without Baptism, they do then reckon these Words as including other Infants beside these. But if these Words include other Infants beside these who were now brought to our Saviour, then his other Words do so too, which say, *Suffer the little Children to come unto me*, for this Reason given signifies, as was said before, that any Children may be suffer'd to come to Christ, who may be admitted into the Kingdom of God. This was a good Reason why these Infants should be suffer'd to come to Christ, and then 'tis a good Reason why others also should be suffer'd to come to him if the Reason reaches to others, as these People believe it does. It is not to be understood then, that our Saviour speaks this Command with a Limitation to the Infants before him.

Secondly, For the right understanding of this Scripture, Let us observe what coming to Christ may be here meant, and may be reckon'd required by him to be permitted.

And as we have seen these words were spoken of Infants, we cannot chuse but see they may be reckon'd to

to come to Christ who are but brought to him ; those who do not come of their own accord, as we may say, who do not come by the choice of their own will, or led to it by their own understanding, they not being in a Capacity at present to exercise these. Even such, by our Saviour's Order, must be allowed to be brought to him, and by his Favour are accounted to come.

And we must not confine the Words to this Sense, Let them come where I am Bodily present, because there is other coming to Christ spoken of in Scripture, we must needs see, beside this: There is a coming into such an Union or Relation to him, as to have a Right to, and to Partake of the Blessings which he as Christ is design'd to bestow on Mankind. We may see this in that the seeking and receiving him as a Saviour, and the devoting ones self to obey his Doctrines and Laws are spoken of under the Phrase of coming to him. In the former Sense, that Phrase is used when our Saviour complained of the unbelieving Jews that they would not come unto him that they might have Life, *John 5. 40.* In the latter Sense it is used, when our Saviour said, *If a Man come to me and hate not his Father and Mother, &c. he cannot be my Disciple, Luke 14. 26.* Which is as much as to say, He that would devote himself to obey me, and follow the Dictates of my Religion, he must throw off all other Engagements whatsoever that would hinder him from learning and observing my Precepts. These Scriptures prove that the entring into a State to have a Right to Salvation by Christ, may be meant and spoke of under the Phrase of coming to Christ. If then Infants can enter into such a State, if this Priviledge be allow'd them, they may come to Christ, and the Command to suffer them to come to him, may be understood to mean, Suffer them to come into such a State, Suffer them to come to such an Union or Relation to me. That they can and are allow'd to enter into such a State, does appear by the following Words, *for of*

such

such is the kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is such a State, and these Words signify they may be admitted to that. And these Words being added by our Saviour as a Reason why they should be suffer'd to come to him, they do oblige us to understand the coming to him, order'd here in this Latitude of Sense, and not to confine the meaning of his Words to his Bodily Presence: For they plainly signify, that Infants must be suffer'd to come into a Condition to enjoy the Blessings and Benefits of that Kingdom, they must be suffer'd to be engag'd to the Duties belonging to the Subjects of it, that is, they must be suffer'd to enter into a State in which they may have Right to Salvation by him, and that is to come to him, according as we see this Phrase used in other places of Holy Scripture.

Thirdly, This will be more manifest if we call to mind what has been said before concerning the meaning of this Phrase, the *kingdom of God*. It has been prov'd that these two Phrases, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Kingdom of God, are used Promiscuously in Holy Scripture, and do mean the same thing. It has been prov'd, that there is a Kingdom of God on Earth, and a Kingdom of God in Heaven: Or that the Kingdom of God is partly on Earth, and partly in Heaven; and so the Kingdom of God, as on Earth must mean the Church of Christ, that State which has a Right to the Happiness of Heaven, which is the Kingdom of God as in Heaven.

These things being consider'd, it will be easy to understand our Saviour's Command here. The Kingdom of God must mean a State to be benefited by the Christ, to partake of those Blessings which the Christ came to bestow on Mankind; to be entred in that Kingdom, or to be of that Kingdom, is to have a Right to those Favours, or to Salvation by Christ. When our Saviour says, then, suffer such to come to me, *for of such is the kingdom of God*, he must be understood to mean, suffer them to come into such an Uni-

on or Relation to me, as those Favours and Blessings do belong to, for those Favours and Blessings are design'd for Infants as well as others, suffer them to come to me for them, for they may have them by coming to me, and they may come to me, they may be in such Union, in such Relation to me as to have a Right to them.

Under the Phrase of coming to him our Lord certainly means the entring upon such a State as the Apostles and their Successors in the Church might have power to admit Children to, or to with-hold them from it, otherwise it had been in vain to say, *suffer such to come to me*. And the Apostles and Ministers of his Church, being those to whom the Administration of this Sacrament is committed, and so the Power of admitting into his Church, or with-holding from it, we may understand, when he says, *suffer them to come to me*; he means suffer them to come into the Church, or admit them to that, *for of such is the kingdom of God*, that is, the Kingdom of God as on Earth, which is that you have Power to admit Persons to by the Sacrament of Baptism, does take in such as these. Our Saviour might speak of this as a coming to him, because entring into the Church, and coming to that is a coming to him; for the Church is call'd in Scripture the Body of Christ, and he is said to be the Head of the Church, and they who are admitted Members of the Church, do therein become Members of Christ. When he orders little Children then to be suffer'd to come to him he orders them to be admitted into his Church; when he says, *of such is the kingdom of God*, he allows them to be admitted into his Church, to be join'd to that Body or Company, who are peculiarly devoted to him, and have Right thereby to his peculiar Favours.

And tho' this Phrase the Kingdom of God here seems to mean in the first place the Church of Christ as on Earth, because the Direction and Command of

our

our Saviour plainly regards such a State as his Ministers might admit Persons to, yet we may understand, that this Phrase may include also the Happiness of Heaven here, and it may be implied, that Infants may be finally sav'd. For the Kingdom of God as on Earth, or in Heaven, is but one Kingdom, and as we must pass by one to the other, so they who may be admitted to the one may be admitted to the other; indeed the entering into the Kingdom of God, as on Earth, is a coming to have a Right to the Happiness of Heaven, or to enjoy the Kingdom of God as there. Our Saviour then teaches us, as what is implied, that Infants may be sav'd by Christ, they may attain in this Life, and even in their Infant-state a Right to Salvation, and if they remove hence they may be remov'd into the Kingdom of God as in Heaven. To say then, *suffer such to come to me*, is to say, suffer and do not hinder them from a State of Salvation, from having a Covenant-Right to everlasting Happiness: Which can mean nothing less than suffer them to enjoy, allow, and administer to them, the means of Admission into such a State, and the appointed Means of this we know is the Sacrament of Baptism, as hath been fully prov'd from the foregoing Text, *John 3. 5.*

For the further Understanding of this Text, it must be observ'd, that when our Saviour says here, *Of such is the kingdom of God*, he means of little Children and grown Persons: He does not mean only those that are qualified like them, but also them. His Argument here intimates all those may be suffer'd to come to Christ, who may be Members of the Church, or may be of the Kingdom of God, and this he uses as an Argument why little Children should be suffer'd to come to him, therefore it concludes that these, as well as such as these, may both come to him, and be of the Kingdom of Heaven. And it is not our Saviour's Design here only to say what sort of grown Persons may be admitted into the Kingdom of God, but also to teach

that Infants too may be admitted into the Kingdom of God, and may come to him. And when the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism would prove from hence, that Infants may be sav'd, they grant that Infants are of the Kingdom of God, as well as the grown Persons that resemble them, and that the Text speaks of them. This Text indeed does say, that Infants may be sav'd but it does not say they may be sav'd without Baptism, for that were to contradict the Text we have produced before this.

But I shall now proceed to the second part of my Design, which is to show how we may from this Text justify the Baptising of Infants: To which purpose it affords us the following Arguments.

1. Here is an exprefs Order and Command of our Saviour that Infants be suffer'd to come to him, therefore he has herein commanded that they be Baptised. Neither they nor grown Persons have any other way appointed of coming to Christ but the Sacrament of Baptism, this is the ordinary appointed way, 'tis therefore the way wherein this Honour and Priviledge may be expected to be obtain'd, and it cannot be expected to be attain'd in any other way; especially where this may be had and is neglected. Infants especially have no other mean or way, according to the establish'd Method of Salvation, whereby they can come to Christ, or come to be united and incorporated with him. When our Lord has said, *suffer little Children to come to me*, and has appointed in general for all Persons a way wherein they shall come to him, he certainly would have it, that Infants should in this way be brought to him. It appears he allows them to come to him in this way, since he allows them to come, and he commands them to be suffer'd to come in this way when he commands that they be *suffer'd to come*, we have in *John 3. 5.* an exprefs Order of Christ for the way in which all Persons must come to him, and that is by the Sacrament of Baptism: We have in this Text under

under our present Consideration an exprefs Command of our Saviour, that Infants be *suffer'd to come to him*. We have then exprefs command in Scripture, that *Infants should come to Christ by Baptism*. These two Texts laid together do make up a plain and exprefs command for the Baptising of Infants.

2. Our Saviour here commands, that Infants be brought into a State of Salvation, for that is meant by ordering, that they be *suffer'd to come to him*; and then he has commanded here that they should be Baptised. To come to Christ is in the Scripture-sense of it to come into a State of Salvation, but Infants have no other appointed way or mean to come into a State of Salvation but this Sacrament, therefore they are order'd herein to be Baptised. In saying of Infants, *of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, he says, they may be in a State of Salvation he allows them to be brought into the Kingdom of Heaven, or into such a State: And then he does therein allow, that they have the Sacrament administred to them, which is appointed by himself to admit all Persons into the Kingdom of Heaven. Shall we say he allows them to be in a State of Salvation, but we know not how they shall come into it, when he has appointed a way and mean for all Persons to come into it. He does himself teach us they may use the appointed means of coming into a State of Salvation, when he says, they may come into such a State; and he teaches, they *must* use that way when that is appointed as the ordinary way for all. They are not born in this State, the Scripture evidently teaches; then they cannot come into it but by Baptism, therefore if they may be, or come into such a State they may be Baptised: And this Text which expressly allows them Salvation does allow them also, by necessary Consequence, the Sacrament of Baptism to bring them into such a State. If they may be sav'd we must needs believe they may be sav'd in the ordinary way unless it had been expressly said they must not, or

some other way had been evidently appointed for them. It is an Extravagant Interpretation of our Saviour's Institution, when they will have it, that he allows Infants to be in a State of Salvation, but does not allow them the ordinary appointed way of bringing them into a State of Salvation, and when that is a way and mean of which they are capable. How can it be imagin'd with any Reason that he should deny them the ordinary mean, when he allows them the Favour which this is appointed to confer? Why should we think the less with-held from them, if the greater be granted? Is the Holy Sacrament of Baptism a more worthy thing than Salvation by Christ? Or it may be ask'd, is the Sign more worthy, more holy, and above them than the thing signified? Is the outward Element and the Application of it more excellent than the inward and spiritual Grace? For these People in allowing Infants Salvation without Baptism, and denying them the Sacrament are evidently guilty of the Absurdity, to say they may have the Spiritual Grace, but not the outward Water. But certainly we must not so interpret the Laws of Christ. In his express allowing here that Infants may be sav'd by him, he has allow'd them by Consequence the Sacrament of Baptism to bring them into a State of Salvation. We may gather and conclude his Will in one Case by what he has express'd in the other.

3. If an outward and visible Sign of inward and spiritual Grace may be applied to Infants as a means whereby they receive the same, and a Pledge to assure it, then they may be Baptised; but this is what we see was done here by our Saviour, therefore his Practice here is a good Warrant to Baptise Infants. These People brought their Infants to our Saviour for some Spiritual Benefits to be conferr'd on them by laying his Hands on them, and praying over them. He did lay his Hands on them and pray, and we cannot think he mock'd and deceiv'd these good People in so doing.

It was not a vain show but he did really confer some Spiritual Blessings upon them : And then our Saviour did apply to them an outward and visible Sign of inward and spiritual Grace, as a means whereby they did receive the same. Now we know Baptism is no more then this. And if Infants are capable of having this done to them, they are capable of being Baptised, if they may have this done to them they may be Baptised : And we see in this Instance, and by the Practice of our Saviour, that they are capable of receiving Spiritual Benefits in this way, and he is an Example of applying to them a Sacrament for such purpose. We do not indeed in Baptising them apply the Sign and Sacrament which he did here, but we do that to them which is of the same Nature, and which is therefore justified in what he did. And we apply to them a Sign and Sacrament which he has appointed as a standing Ordinance in his Church. Certainly his Example and Practice, together with his express Command, *suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not*, has the nature and force of a Command to apply to such an ordinary appointed outward sign and mean of an inward and spiritual Grace, and so of Baptising them. There is nothing done in the bringing and admitting Infants to Baptism, but what was done by these People, who brought their Infants to our Saviour, and was allow'd by him in his allowing and approving them in what they did, and gratifying them in what they brought their Children for, therefore without doubt the bringing them to Baptism is allow'd and approv'd by our Saviour.

I have in the Explication of this Scripture and the Arguments deriv'd from it prevented or remov'd several of the Mistakes of these People in their Interpretations of it, whereby they hinder themselves from seeing that it does sufficiently justify the Baptising of Infants. But there is one thing more which deceives them in this Matter, and which therefore needs a particular Consideration and Answer.

Objection. They are taught to say, that our Saviour did not Baptise these Children, nor order his Apostles to Baptise them, and therefore the Baptising of Infants is not justified in this Text. And one wretched defender of their Error says, Christ speaking here so favourably of Infants and yet Baptised them not, may teach us to judge favourably of them, and do any Charitable Office towards them, but not to presume to give them Holy Baptism without Christ's Warrant.

Answer. To this several things may be answered which will sufficiently show there is nothing in it worth regarding.

It may be said our Saviour did not Baptise them, because he had now ceased to Administer this Sacrament himself, and did it by his Disciples.

It may be observ'd that these Words, *suffer the little Children to come unto me*, were not spoken of these Children, who were now with our Saviour, but of others, and of them together with others he says, *of such is the kingdom of God*, and for this Reason he might not order his Disciples to Baptise these Children. He gave the Ministers of his Church upon this occasion, a standing Rule and Law how they should deal with Infants in general, but he gave them herein no Command or Rule at all concerning these Infants in particular, and therefore we find no order here to Baptise these in particular.

These Words are favourably spoken of Infants in general, and are a sufficient Warrant to Baptise them. They contain as much as that comes to. They order that Infants should be suffer'd to come to Christ in such a way as they can come to him, and that is only by Baptism; there is no other way appointed for them, or any else to come to Christ. Our Lord has by his Example and Practice upon this Occasion given us Warrant to Baptise them, especially as it is added to his Command. We have his Word for it here that they

they may be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, which is certainly Warrant enough to Baptise them when he has made Baptism the Sacrament and Mean of Admission into the Kingdom of Heaven. Shall we think our Saviour has done what these People impute to him? That is, That he should say the Infants may be admitted, but shall not have the Sacrament of Admission: They shall come into the House, but not at the Door, or common way of entrance: They shall come in by some other way which I tell you not off? Where has he said this? When he has appointed a way of Admission in general Terms, he has therein directed all to come in that way.

Again; It was not necessary that our Saviour should order these Children to be Baptised, or give any order for the Baptising of Children in general, if he had order'd the Baptising of Infants before this, and that we may justly think he had done. It is certain that his Baptism was administred before this, and was the appointed way of Admission into the Kingdom of God, that is into the Christian Church, or a State of Salvation. He might therefore have order'd the Baptising of Infants before, and for that Reason not do it now. When it was once order'd and practiced he did not need at every time that a Child came before him to order it expressly again. He might say, *For of such is the kingdom of God*, to call to their Minds that Infants were by his Order and by the common Sacrament admitted into the Church, and give this as a good Reason why they should be suffer'd to come into his Presence which is part of what he enjoyn'd should be suffer'd when he said, *suffer such to come to me*: He said this to signify that if they were Baptised, or being so, they had Right to the Spiritual Favours and Blessings which he came to bestow, and therefore they might come to him for them.

It may be that our Saviour did not Baptise these Infants, nor order them to be Baptised by his Disciples, be-

because they had been Baptised before. These People brought their young Children to our Saviour, to receive some Spiritual Blessings from him in another way ; and for this Reason his Disciples might rebuke them as being Troublesome to their Master, and as knowing their Infants secur'd of the Blessings of the Messiah in their Baptism. 'Tis very probable they were Baptised before in that Christ did lay his Hands on them ; For, it is observ'd, we never read in the New Testament of Hands laid on any unbaptised Person, unless in order to the working some miraculous cure on their Bodies, of which there is not any Sign here. It is highly probable they had been Baptised, because our Saviour so favourably receiv'd them : He had Instituted Baptism before this, and those that were entred into the Kingdom, or joyn'd to him, had been according to his Institution Baptised. And if the Parents of the Children, had neglected his Ordinance 'tis not to be imagin'd he would so graciously and favourably have receiv'd their Infants, and laid his Hands on them, to convey in this way his Spiritual Blessings to them. 'Tis most probable he thus favour'd these Infants as particularly his own, as having been dedicated to him in Baptism, and as having attain'd thereby a Right to Salvation by him and to all the Spiritual Blessings which do accompany or belong to it.

Lastly ; If Christ himself was pleas'd in his own Person to bestow Spiritual Blessings by an extraordinary way on any Infants, this does not release or discharge us from obeying an ordinary Rule, or from using appointed Means to obtain such. If he gave these Children the Gifts of the Holy Spirit by laying on his Hands, without their receiving of his Baptism, this does not disanul his Commandment for Baptism. In an ordinary way we must for all this expect the Gifts of his Holy Spirit for Infants, in and by the use of this Sacrament : And they, we must reckon, are

to be born of Water, that they may be born of the Spirit too. Our Lord is not now upon Earth, that we should bring our Infants to him for his Blessings where he were bodily present. And if he were, yet having appointed another way for them to become Partakers of his Spiritual Blessings we could not expect that he would by receiving and blessing them in this way, give us Encouragement to despise or neglect his Ordinance. It does not suit his Infinite Wisdom to establish an Ordinance for any purpose, and then commonly to allow such purpose to be obtain'd without the use of his Ordinance. Tho' our Lord did in this way convey Spiritual Blessings to these Infants, and not order, that we find, the Baptising them, tho' they had not been Baptised before, he may design that others be Baptised, as the common way of obtaining his Blessings: And in that he did convey Spiritual Blessings in such a way as is here mention'd to Infants he has encourag'd the bringing them to a Sacrament for such purpose, and allow'd the Application of a Sacrament to them, at least the Sacrament of Baptism, the Benefit of which to Infants does not depend upon the Exercise of their own Mind and Thoughts about it, as did not the Benefit of our Saviour's laying his Hands on them. A Sacrament of like Nature then may be used about them we may say, without running into the Necessity of allowing them the Lord's Supper. And I think it so silly a return to some Arguments I have seen urg'd for the Baptising of Infants, to say they conclude for the Allowance of their receiving the Lord's Supper, that I shall take no further notice of it through this whole Book, but shall only say this that according to the Holy Scriptures, and the early and long Practice of the Christian Church, I should rather allow them to partake of the Lord's Supper too, then to deny them Baptism.

C H A P. III.

Wherein is explain'd and improv'd to the justifying the Baptising of Infants, the Text in *Matth.* 28. 19.

Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy ghost.

AS this Text of Scripture is used by the Adversaries of Infant Baptism to condemn this Practice of the Church of God, and to prove it as well as they can unlawful, it should be referr'd to the third part of this Design; Where I intend to propose and answer their Objections and Arguments against this. But because they greatly misunderstand, and misapply this Text, while they use it for their purpose; and because if it be rightly understood and applied it affords us some very good Arguments to justify what they condemn, therefore I think it may belong to this part of our Design to consider, and make our use of it here.

That I may use it in the best manner I can think of to convince these mistaken People of their Error, and of their Mistake in applying this Scripture to maintain it, I shall consider and speak to it in the following Method.

1. I shall produce their Explication of this Scripture, and give an Account how they do misapply it to their purpose.

2. I shall show the Mistakes they are under in their so interpreting and applying it.

3. I shall produce some Arguments which this Text affords to urge and justify the Baptising of Infants.

What they say in their Interpretation and Application of this Scripture to their purpose I shall fairly represent, and as near as I can in their own Words.

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They say, that in these words we have the Institution of Baptism as it is to be administred in the Christian Church. And here, as our Lord has directed that the Apostles should teach and Baptise, from this order of the words we are to conclude that all who may be Baptised are to be first Taught. Those and no other, say they, has our Lord appointed should be Baptised, but those who have been first made Disciples by being taught the Christian Doctrine. The word *Teach* here, does not signifie simply to Teach whether with Effect or without it, but it signifies to Teach till Men are taught. And the Lord hath plainly given a Caution in this Scripture for the leaving out Infants in this Administration according to rule. For in that he directs them to Baptise Disciples upon preaching he does exclude infants who are not such Disciples, nor according to ordinary providence can be. And this, say they, the Apostles could easily understand, as knowing that under the term Disciples in common speech, and in the whole New Testament, those only are meant who being taught did profess the Doctrine which they had been taught; As when the Scripture Speaks of *John's* Disciples, or the Disciples of the Pharises, or of Christs Disciples. And then, if this be the appointment of Christ it is that we must follow, this is the rule according to which we must administer Holy Things, and he that does otherwise follows his own invention and is guilty of Will-worship.

This is the use that the Adversaries of Infant Baptism make of this Scripture.

I shall now show that there are several mistakes they fall into while they do thus interpret and apply it, and that in truth it does not serve the purpose which they use it for, this whole matter I shall represent under the following particulars.

1. We have not in this Scripture the first and original Commission which was given to the Apostles to Baptise. They had Baptised before this, and therefore had received Commission to do it before, and, with that, direction

rection also to whom they should administer this Sacrament: and so we have no reason to think the Apostles had their full and compleat direction for the Administration of Baptism in these words. It cannot be said indeed when it was that our Saviour gave the first command and direction to his Disciples to baptise: But it appears that at his first gathering of Disciples to himself they were admitted and engag'd such by Baptism, and he set up his Baptism besides that of St. John the Baptist, and before John had finish'd his work. This is related by St. John the Evangelist who says (Chap. 3. v. 22.) *Jesus and his Disciples came into Judea and there he tarried with them and baptised*, this was while John was carrying on his Baptism. After this, when those who offer'd themselves to be disciples to Jesus became very numerous, he left off baptising himself, and committed the work to his Disciples: tis said in *John 4. 1.* that, then, *Jesus baptised not, but his Disciples*. It is evident, then, that he had given them Commission before this to Baptise, and by consequence direction how, and to whom, they should administer this Sacrament. And then, what direction he had given them before was not necessary to be repeated now; nor was it necessary to give them at this time all the direction that he would leave them to guide themselves in this matter by. He now added to the directions to Baptise what he had not given them before, and now thought fit to command or allow besides as we may suppose: And therefore we may believe he had not given them in particular what he now deliver'd, which was that they should go to the Gentiles, to any Nation of the World, and admit them into his Church, and to be his Disciples by Baptism, and should Baptise all *in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost*. This then is the most that we can suppose was not said to the Apostles before concerning this matter, but we cannot conclude that was not said to them before concerning this matter which is not said here neither, unless we had any intimation here that

we must understand this Scripture as the full and compleat Commission to baptise. Therefore tho he would have Infants baptised it was not necessary that he should give them that direction here because he might have given it them before.

We are not bound then to fetch our intire direction who may be baptised from this Scripture taken alone. But we may direct our selves in this matter, and in the Interpretation of this Scripture by what we find to have been said by our Saviour relating to this Sacrament, and relating to Infants elsewhere. And then, when he had said before that Infants may be admitted into the Kingdom of God, and had also said none shall be admitted into the Kingdom of God but those that are born again of Water and of the Spirit, that is those that are Baptised, we may assure our selves our Lord had before this given direction for the Baptiseing of Infants. It is not to be said then that we have here the Institution of Baptism, as if it were only to be learnt from these words. We have here an Institution and Direction for Baptism, but not the only one, nor a Compleat one if Infants may not be baptised as will hereafter appear.

2. It will clearly demonstrate the mistake of these people in their Interpretation of this Scripture, and applying it to condemn the Baptising of Infants, To show that we are not bound by the order of the words here first to teach all that we Baptise; as they think we should do because our Saviour says *teach all Nations baptiseing them*. They will have it to be concluded from hence that teaching must go before Baptising upon every subject that is Baptised, and such teaching too as that they be taught and become instructed and resolv'd Disciples to, or professors of, the Doctrine which is taught. But that we cannot be determin'd by the order of the words here, nor are bound to conclude thus from them, these things following will abundantly demonstrate.

If we may frame an Argument from the order of the words in Scripture, and must be directed by that in our Interpretations, then we must be directed by it in one place as well as in another: But I shall easily show this is an unsure rule, and without doubt a false one. It may serve to convince them of this to let them see that this rule will confound themselves. And tho they think it would serve their Turn, in this Place they shall find it quite against them in other places of Scripture. If the Order of the Words in Scripture must be every where regarded and govern our Interpretation of it, we must say, that Baptism was administred by *John the Baptist*, before teaching and before the Profession of Repentance: For 'tis said of him (*Mar. 1. 4.*) *John did baptise in the Wilderness, and preach the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins.* If the Order of the Words in Scripture is to follow'd, as the Rule of Interpreting, we must, according to this Text, Baptise even grown Persons, before they have been instructed, and have profess'd their Repentance. In the 5th of that Chapter, the Baptists Baptising is set before their Confession of Sins who were Baptised by him, which Confession we may look upon as their Profession of Repentance. There went out to him says the Evangelist) all the Land of *Judea*, and they of *Jerusalem*, and were all Baptised of him confessing their Sins.

Again; Let us but consider the whole of our Saviour's Words here together, and we shall see this Argument from the Order of the Words confounding these mistaken People themselves. If we read the 19th and 20th verses here together, we shall see that if there is a teaching order'd in this 19th ver. to go before Baptising, there is a teaching in the 20th ver. order'd after Baptising, and which therefore according to their Argument, ought to follow after it. And then if teaching ought to go before Baptising, because 'tis order'd before it as they think in the 19th verse, Baptising ought to go before teaching, and on the

the same Subjects, because 'tis express'd and commanded before the Teaching in the 20. v. And then, according to their Interpretation of our Saviour's Commission here, while they will have it that all who may be Baptised must be taught before they be Baptised, because he sets Teach before Baptise, we must understand the Rule thus: That we must Teach all whom we Baptise, before we Baptise them, and we must Baptise all whom we may Teach before we teach them. Certainly all that are Baptised must according to the 20th *verse*, be taught whatever Christ has commanded: If then all that are to be Baptised must be first taught according to the 19th *verse*, they would make our Saviour's Rule to consist of this Self-contradiction and Absurdity, but there can be no Contradiction or Absurdity in our Saviour's Rule, tho' there is in this their way of Interpreting what he Commands. And indeed he has not said or meant in the 19th *verse*, that all that may be Baptised shall be taught before they be Baptised, tho' he has certainly meant and intended, by adding the Words in the 20th *verse*, that all who are Baptised shall be taught whatever he has commanded: This is certain, and therefore he did not intend in the 19th *verse*, that all should be first taught before they are Baptised. For it is impossible that all should be first taught before they are Baptised, and yet all be Baptised before they are taught. But the order of the Words throughout the Commission must be observ'd, if in one part of it, and must be alike interpreted through the whole, and therefore this of the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism is a false and mistaken Interpretation of the first part of this Commission.

To allow the most that can be to the Order of the Words in our Saviour's Commission, and to give a reasonable and consistent Interpretation of it we must say: By our Saviour's Rule here, as there is a teaching to go before Baptising, so there may a Baptising go before teaching, and this must regard different

Subjects. We may say from this Scripture, that some must be taught before they be Baptised, and some may be Baptised before they be taught, according to the Order of the Words in our Saviour's Commission. Grown Persons who were never by Baptism admitted into the Church of Christ, must be taught as the Case was in those Times before they were Baptised: But Infants may be Baptised before they are taught. And I think 'tis easy enough to see which of these two Interpretations, with regard as much as may be to the order of the Words, is most reasonable and just. When the Apostles went to any Nation that had never heard of the true Religion, as our Saviour did by this Commission send them to the Gentiles, to these Nations they must first preach the Gospel before any could be disposed to receive it, and by their Preaching they must perswade some to receive their Doctrine before any could of right be Baptised. Because none were to be Baptised, without doubt according to the Rule of administering Circumcision, but either those grown Persons who were so far acquainted with the true Religion as to desire and show themselves willing to embrace it, or else the Infants of those who were Baptised and entred into the Profession of the true Religion. They must Baptise some grown Persons to gather and settle a Church, and then the Infants of those grown Persons, or those whom they had Authority over, and the Disposal of, might be Baptised, and entred into a settled Constituted Church.

3. They are greatly mistaken while they think that the true and full meaning of the Word which our Saviour uses here is express'd and contain'd in the *English Word Teach*. The Word does include teaching and somewhat else, even all that by our Lord's Appointment goes to the making a Disciple to Christ, or Christian Religion. The Word here rendred *Teach* includes both Baptising and Teaching in our Lord's

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intention, and therefore when he had express'd his Mind in a general Word, he afterwards spoke the Particulars contain'd in it, and which he design'd by it, in the Words Baptising and Teaching. And therefore a fitter Word to render the Original by, and which might include both were *Disciples*, so as to make our Saviour say here, Go ye Disciple to me, or make and gather Disciples to my Religion among all Nations by Baptising and Teaching them. That Disciples are made by teaching, these People allow; and their mistake is that they will have it, that Disciples can only be made by teaching; or that none can have the Name of Disciples but those that are taught. But the Scripture plainly tells us, Disciples are also made to Christ by baptising. This is the evident meaning of that Expression (*John 4. 1.*) *Jesus made and baptised more Disciples than John*; He made and entred, or admitted them, his Disciples in and by Baptising them. When they took Baptism they profess'd or engag'd to become Disciples, to learn his Doctrine, and obey his Laws, and this was enough to give them the Name of Disciples, tho' they had not been yet taught nor learnt the Religion and Doctrine which they became Disciples to. Our Saviour in this Commission requires both Baptising and Teaching to the making Disciples to him, and sets Baptising before Teaching. He does not in the Word rendred *Teach* in the 19th Verse, command them Teaching, but that which he here commands, is what includes both Baptising and Teaching. He commands them to gather, and make, or admit Disciples to him out of all Nations: And then he tells them in the Words following how this is to be done, and mentions first Baptising and then Teaching. What is here in the 19th Verse order'd to be done, is order'd to be done Baptising, that is, in and by Baptising, the same thing in the next Verse, is order'd to be done in and by Teaching; this 19th Verse then does not oblige that Teaching

must needs go before Baptising, upon every one that is Baptised. These two things must go to the making Men Disciples to Christ, Baptising and Teaching. They must in taking Baptism engage and take upon them to learn his Doctrine, and obey his Laws, and then they must, as Disciples, be taught his Doctrine and Laws. He is pleased to require this Solemnity of Baptism, as the Form of Admission into his School into the Number of those that shall be taught his Religion.

Having thus discover'd the Mistakes of these People in their Interpretation of this Scripture, and think represented a right one; I shall now proceed to the next thing intended: Which is to represent the Arguments which this Text of Scripture affords for the Practice of Baptising Infants, to demonstrate the Lawfulness and Duty of it. And they are these that follow.

1. We have here our Saviour's Command and Direction to admit by Baptism all that become Disciples to him; This is here made the general way of admitting Disciples to him. His Commission includes all and exempts none. It orders the People of all Nations to be thus admitted his Disciples, but the Infants are a part of the Nations. He sends them to the Nations of the World to receive Disciples among them by Baptising, but does not say whether Men or Women, Young or Old shall be discipled among them. His Commission excludes none, therefore 'tis a guilty Presumption in any Men to exclude any. It might as well be said he excludes Women because he does not mention them in particular, as that he excludes Infants, because he does not expressly mention them; and it may as well be said he excludes Men, because they are not expressly mention'd; and so this general Command which includes all sorts would be in the same way interpreted to include none. If his Words do include all they exclude none. If he had expressly

any sort in particular, the rest might with some Reason have been thought excluded, but since he has express'd no Particulars, he has excluded none. It must be remembred, I have prov'd he does not say here they must be first taught that are Baptised. It is certain the Commission intends that those of any Nation which they should come to who would or could be discipled, should by Baptism be admitted Disciples; he does not confine them to any one sort whom they were to admit Disciples by Baptism; therefore the Commission requires Baptism to be administred to all who could be made Disciples, therefore also to Infants if they can be admitted or made Disciples.

2. And then I may argue Infants may be made or admitted Disciples to Christ, therefore they may be Baptised. There is no need that they who are admitted Disciples must be first taught, those may be admitted Disciples who are to be taught: And Infants may be made or admitted Disciples. If this can be made good I cannot see by what shift these People can still maintain and harden themselves in their Error. It is expressly said all shall be discipled by Baptism: It shall be made appear Infants may be Discipled, they may be in that Number, and then what difficulty can there be to own that they may be Baptised? The wretched People are told by some that undertake to guide them, that none can be said to be Disciples but those that are actually taught, those who are taught with effect, and so as to have learnt the Doctrine which they are Disciples to, and to make Profession of it. Such and such only, they will say, have the Name of Disciples belonging to them either in common Speech, or in the New Testament, and in this Sense Infants cannot be made Disciples. But this is a great Mistake. A Person may be said to be a Disciple or Scholar to any Man, from his very first beginning, and giving himself up to learn what a Master teaches. And we know that the

Word is used by other Writers in the Greek Tongue with that meaning, and therefore may be said to have this Signification in common Speech. But I shall only insist upon this, that the Word has this Signification as it is used in the New Testament which we ought to be determin'd by; some are call'd Disciples to Christ there who had not actually learnt his Doctrine, nor did profess to believe it, and while they could yet be but Learners, and then were not learnt. From the first, he that gave himself up in Appearance and Profession to follow Christ, to learn his Religion became, and was reckon'd a Disciple, tho' he had not yet so learnt his Doctrine as to profess this. A remarkable Evidence of this we have in the 6th Chapter of *John*. Some Discourse which our Saviour had held to those who were become his Disciples, and are call'd so, to instruct them in the Christian Religion, and the way of Salvation by him, we are told offended some of these, and 'tis said of them in 66th Verse, that from that time many of his *Disciples* went back and walked no more with him. They are call'd Disciples here, surely, before they had been taught with effect, for when they heard some part of his Doctrine which they did not like they fell off from him. And it is observably said of some of his *Disciples* that they did not believe on him in 64th Verse. By the Connexion of that with the 61st Verse of the Chapter, we may see this is said of those call'd Disciples. And then here are Disciples that did not believe on Jesus, and then Infants may be Disciples, tho' they are not so taught as actually to believe. The meaning of applying this Title to such People is plainly this: That those were reckon'd Disciples to Christ, and by Baptism without doubt admitted into that Number, who did but give up themselves to learn his Doctrine. They were call'd his Disciples from their beginning to learn of him, upon entring into his School, and became such by taking upon them a Solemn Engagement

ment to learn and obey, not because they had actually learnt and digested his Doctrine; this is not necessary we see here to the denominating any person a Disciple according to the sence of that word in the New Testament. And since Baptism was the solemn Ceremony and Instrument of admitting persons Disciples to Christ, as we may learn from *John* 4. 1. 'tis without doubt that they had been admitted his Disciples by Baptism. That is, in taking this Sacrament they had come under an engagement to learn his precepts, and obey his Laws, and made profession of coming under that engagement. And it is order'd in the Text under our present consideration, that thus the Apostles should admit Disciples in all Nations.

In this sence 'tis certain Infants may become Disciples to Christ; They may come under a solemn engagement and obligation to learn his Doctrines and obey his Laws, and that before they can understand either. They may be bound to this in the taking of Baptism, therefore they may be Discipled or admitted Disciples by Baptism. I have proved they may come under such an engagement to God already: But I shall now add somewhat more to make it the more evident and undeniable, that Infants may be engag'd even while Infants, and by Baptism too, to learn and obey a Doctrine which at that time they do not understand. When the whole Nation of Israel are said by the Apostle to have been all *Baptised unto Moses* in their passage through the Red-Sea, (1 Cor. 10. 2.) the meaning of it is that they did therein come under an engagement, and were bound to receive and obey the rule of Religion which *Moses* should deliver them from God. This is said of the whole nation; And then, as the Infants which they carried with them out of Egypt are included in the number spoken of, they pass through the Red-Sea, as well as the grown persons, they also came under that engagement, and that was an engagement taken

upon them all in and by a Baptism, both by old and young. The Infants of Israel did in this passage according to the Apostles words, enter into the school of *Moses* and became Disciples to him, as they came under an obligation and engagement with the rest to learn and obey the Religion taught from God by *Moses*; therefore Infants may be Discipled, and by Baptism, they may in and by that Sacrament become engag'd to learn and obey the Laws of God, tho while Infants they cannot understand them. Let us consider this expression of the Apostle yet further, and it will appear yet more to be much to our purpose. When the Nation of Israel were Baptised unto *Moses*, they may be said to have become Disciples to *Moses*: But then we shall observe that they were Discipled to *Moses* before they were taught the Doctrine which they were Discipled to, so far were they from being taught with effect and so as to have actually learnt it, and this may be said of them all, of the grown persons as well as of the Infants; and this appears thus. They were Baptised unto *Moses* at the Red-Sea, when they fled out of Egypt, but the Law which God gave them by *Moses* was all given after this, while they were in the Wilderness: They could not then be actually taught that Law before that Law was given, yet they were Discipled to *Moses* before; they were, then, Discipled to *Moses* before they had learnt the Law given by *Moses*, because they had been discipled to him before the Law was given, and they could not learn it, certainly, before it was given: If these people will not allow us to say they were discipled to *Moses* when they were Baptised, they must allow they were Baptised before they were Discipled, before they had actually learnt the Law of *Moses*. If this only must be the true Discipling, then by this expression of the Apostle it appears, persons might be Baptised before they are Discipled: and then Infants as well as others may be Baptised before they are discipled, because this may be

be done before they have learnt. 'Tis certainly the evident and plain meaning of the Apostle in this expression, who knew that all persons were now admitted Disciples unto Christ by Baptism, and who speaks this without doubt with allusion to it, that the whole Nation of Israel were entred or engag'd Disciples to *Moses* by a sort of Baptism in their passage through the Red-Sea. And the Apostle did undoubtedly reckon that Infants might be Discipled, and that by Baptism, to a Doctrine which they could not understand; that it was not necessary that a person must be fully taught, before he could be Discipled by Baptism, that a person might be accounted a Disciple, and might become such by Baptism, who was but engag'd to learn the Doctrine which he was become a Disciple to.

But, to conclude this matter with that which I think must needs determine those that are not confirm'd in their Error, If Infants in the New Testament have the Name of Disciples, it cannot be doubted but those may be call'd Disciples and are there so call'd, who are but under a solemn engagement by Baptism to learn and obey the Christian Doctrine, nor can it be reasonably doubted or denyed but they may be Discipled by Baptism, and so were design'd to be in our Saviour's Commission, to Disciple all Nations Baptising them. It will be very evident that Infants are included under the name of Disciples in the New Testament, if we consider and compare Acts 15. 21. with Acts 21. 21. In the former of those Texts the Apostle speaking of the Imposing of Circumcision upon those of the Christians who came into the Church of Christ from among the Uncircumcised Nations, calls it the *putting a yoke upon the neck of the Disciples*. Now we know that those who would put Circumcision upon these Christians, they did require that their Children as well as their grown persons should be circumcised. And therefore it was charg'd upon St. Paul, that as he every where maintain'd the no necessity of continuing Circumcision

in the Christian Church, so he maintain'd the necessity of Circumcising their Children, as is expressly said in the latter of those forementioned Texts. By this it evidently appears that their Children were included under the Name of Disciples in the former Texts. The word there does include all those whom the mistaken Jewish Converts would have had to be circumcised, then it certainly includes Infants, for they would have had them circumcised. The Name of Disciples, then, is given in the New Testament to those who were but entred into the School of Christ, engag'd in the solemn appointed manner to learn his Doctrine, and obey his Laws; And it is therefore given to Infants, and then it undeniably follows that they may be discipled and may be so by Baptism, for that is the solemn rite and ceremony of taking that engagement by the Law of Christ. When therefore our Lord gave his Apostles commission in general terms to admit Disciples to him out of all Nations by Baptism, he intended they should admit the Infants of those grown Persons who were entred or admitted his Disciples.

3. The Baptising of Infants is justified from this Scripture, in that they are capable of what is here order'd by our Saviour in his Command to Baptise all persons in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy-Ghost. The general expression of the Command must be reckon'd to design the including all that are capable of what is here commanded; therefore if Infants are capable of it they must be reckon'd included in the Command, when the expression in it is *all Nations*. Let us consider, then, what it is to be Baptised in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. And the meaning of that is agreed to be the Dedicating of the person Baptised to the worship and acknowledgment of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, or to Honour and acknowledge God according to the Laws

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and Doctrines of Christian Religion. But it cannot be said that Infants are not capable of this. Parents may bring their Children under Obligation to serve God, as well as bring them under any Covenant with Man. The Parents in the Christian Church in bringing their Child to Baptism, may engage it to serve and honour God according to the Laws of Christian Religion, as well as the Jewish Parent by bringing his Child to Circumcision, did therein oblige him to honour and acknowledge God according to the Laws deliver'd by *Moses*. It is but the same thing in effect which is done by both, and the Infants of one and the other are equally capable of it.

4. We have here our Saviour's Command to enlarge his Church, and therefore we cannot think it reasonable to conclude from hence, that he did in this very command intend to straiten it; much less, can we think our selves oblig'd to conclude this from hence. It must be understood that the Apostles, when they were sent out to preach the Gospel by our Saviour in his Life time, and to admit Disciples to him, were sent only to the People of the Jewish Nation, as we see by *Matth. 10. 5, 6.* where 'tis said, *Jesus sent forth the twelve, and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any City of the Samaritans enter not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* But now upon his Resurrection having, as he says in the Verse before this Text, *All power given him in heaven and earth,* and being resolv'd to enlarge his Church, and to take into it the People of any Nation of the World, he did now give his Apostles Commission to go among them and preach the Gospel, and to admit Disciples among them by Baptism, which he had appointed for the Solemn Form and Ceremony of Admission into his Church. And this his Commission does appear design'd to enlarge his Church; that it should not from henceforth be confin'd to one Nation, but should take in all. And then

then if he gave order here to take in more than had been taken in before, we cannot conclude from hence, that he would leave out any that had been admitted before. But we know that Infants had been admitted into the Church in the Times of the Jewish State by a Sacrament appointed for Admission into the Church. Would our Saviour then, can we imagine, without expressing this thing, design to leave all Infants out when some had certainly been taken in before, and in that very Command which is apparently given to enlarge his Church? Would he *intimate* it should be straitned, when he *express'd* that it should be enlarg'd? Can we reasonably *gather or conclude it to be his Will to exclude some that had been admitted before, from a Command to admit more then were admitted before? The Commission and Command is express'd in general Terms, *Go ye Disciple all Nations*: It is design'd to enlarge his Church: Does not this forbid us to think it does intend to leave out or exclude any from partaking of a Sacrament of Admission, who had been allow'd a Sacrament of Admission before? 'Tis certainly much more reasonable and safe to conclude from hence, that since he here commands the People of all Nations to be admitted into his Church by Baptism, with a Design to enlarge his Church, and he did while his Church was more straitned admit Infants by a Sacrament, therefore he would have Infants still admitted by the Sacrament, which he here appoints for the Ceremony of admitting the People of all Nations.

C H A P. IV.

Wherein the Text in *Acts* 2.28,39. is explain'd and improv'd to the justifying of Infant-Baptism; which is in these Words: Then Peter said unto them, *Repent and be baptised every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

THis is another of the particular Texts in the New Testament wherein the Lawfulness, and consequent Duty, of Baptising Infants is contain'd and taught: Tho' the Adversaries of their Baptism make use of this also to justify their Error, as thinking that the actual Repentance of all, who may be Baptised is here requir'd, because Repentance as well as Baptism was requir'd here of those whom the Apostle spoke to. For this Reason might this Scripture also have been consider'd among their Arguments and Objections: But it is so apparently mistaken by them, and wrested, in being brought to maintain their Error, and contains so manifest and full Proofs of the Lawfulness of Infant-Baptism, that I judge it most fit to be produced among the Texts from whence this may be prov'd. And I desire it may be observ'd, that as in the three foregoing Texts I have justified this Practice from our Saviour's Doctrine and Command; I shall in speaking to this Text show that the Baptising of Infants is the certain Doctrine of the Apostles of our Saviour also; and is here suggested as lawful and a Duty, in the first Discourse deliver'd by any of them after they were endow'd with the Gift of the Holy Ghost

Ghost which our Lord promised them, to lead them into all Truth.

In making use of this Text to vindicate the Practice of the Church of God in the Baptising of Infants, I shall first represent and vindicate the Right Interpretation of it; And then take notice how it does justify and urge the Baptising of Infants.

For the right Understanding of this Scripture there are these three Enquiries must be answer'd. (1.) What the *Promise* is which the Apostle here speaks of? (2.) To whom we must, from his Words understand that Promise to belong, and who may be Partakers of it? (3.) By what means or in what way they to whom it belongs are here directed to become Partakers of it?

I begin with the first of these: To enquire and show what *Promise* it is which the Apostle *Peter* here speaks of. To understand which rightly, we must look back upon the former part of this Chapter, and see what was the occasion of the Apostles speaking these Words. And the sum of what we have there concerning it is as follows. The time was now come when it pleas'd our Lord to bestow that extraordinary Measure and Gift of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles which he had promis'd them before his Ascension into Heaven, and which was necessary to qualify and enable them, to publish and propagate his Religion to all Nations of the World. And this was now done, and was attended with such wonderful Circumstances, that a Rumour of it spread throughout the City of *Jerusalem* where the Apostles were gathered together. This drew a mighty concourse of all sorts of People to the Place, where the Apostles were, to see and know what was come to pass. While the Multitude were amazed at what they observ'd, and divided in their Opinions about it, some making very perverse and malicious Interpretations of it, as is common for Mankind to do of things which they do not understand, St. *Peter* was mov'd by the Holy Ghost to give them a right and true Account of this matter.

matter. And he tells them, *the very Jesus whom they had lately crucified was their promised Messias, or the Christ*: He was the great Person whom their Prophets had foretold, and to whom the Jews ought to have submitted, and in whom they ought to have beliv'd, that they might obtain by him the Favour of God: And that from him being now ascended into Heaven, and sate at the right hand of God, these wonderful Gifts which they were Witnesses of were bestow'd upon these of his Followers. He says, *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ*, ver. 36. Upon this 'tis said in ver. 37. *They were pricked in their Heart*; They were convinced their Nation had done a thing which must needs be very guilty and provoking in the sight of God, and very pernicious and hurtful to themselves. They must needs, and did, think they had forfeited all that Favour from God which the Messias was intended to have made them Partakers of, and had further incurr'd and highly provok'd his Displeasure. They saw themselves evidently in a grievous Case, and became solicitous how to mend it; and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, *Men and Brethren what shall we do?* in ver. 37. The meaning of which Question if we consider the Context, we shall see must needs be this: What must we do to recover the forfeited Favour of God, and to obtain the Blessings and Benefits which the Messias was promised, and which he came to bestow. It was as much as to say, what shall we do to be sav'd by this Jesus the Christ, from the wrath of God and the desert of our Sins?

To this Question the Apostle returns in answer the words of the Text, which we have under our present consideration. Wherein we see, he Exhorts them to repent and be Baptised in order to their receiving remission of their sins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. And to encourage them to what he exhorted them to, he tells them, *The promise is to you and your Children, &c.* By the word

word *Promise* he must mean the things promised, and in general the Blessings and Benefits which the Messiah came to bestow upon Mankind. He lets them know, then, in answer to their solicitude and concern, That altho they had rejected the Christ, yet their condition was not desperate; But if they would repent of this and be Baptised, they might yet come to partake of the Good which he would have done them, and might be sav'd by him from the wrath they fear'd, and brought to the Happiness which he was design'd to advance his followers to. In this way they might be partakers of salvation by him. This general expression, *The Promise*, contains the two particulars mention'd in the former verse, for the obtaining of which he exhorts them to repent and be Baptised, which are *Remission of Sins*, and the *Gift of the Holy Ghost*. That these are included in the Promise spoke of appears, in that he gives this as a Motive and Encouragement to what he exhorted them to for the obtaining these particular Blessings, that the Promise was to them. If the Promise he speaks of did not include Remission of Sins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost, it had been vain and impertinent to say, *For the promise is to you*, as an Encouragement to them to do what he advised for the obtaining Remission of Sins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

The Adversaries of Infant-Baptism would have us believe, that the Promise here mention'd means only the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost: Such as the Apostles had now newly receiv'd to qualify them to preach the Gospel to all Nations: Such were the Gift of speaking divers Languages, and of knowing Divine Things without study, and of Ability to preach without Preparation, or the Gift of inspired Knowledge of Divine Matters, and the Power of working Miracles to confirm their Divine Mission. But if we consider the Context, and the Circumstances of it, we shall easily see that this is a mistaken and forced Interpretation of the Words.

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For we cannot think but the Apostle spoke to the purpose: He understood what was the meaning of the *Jews* when they said, *What must we do?* out of a sense of their Guilt in rejecting the Messiah, and that he answer'd to that Concern of theirs. And it does not at all appear that they were prickt in their Hearts, or under so great a Concern, that they might enjoy these extraordinary Gifts; they were not troubled, without doubt, for that they were not all speaking in several Languages, the Matters of Divine Inspiration; nor did they ask the Apostles what they must do to obtain this Gift. They were troubled, certainly, at the Guilt they had contracted in rejecting and Crucifying the Christ; and were solicitous what they must do to recover the Favour of God, and the Blessings which the Christ came to bestow: And to this concern of theirs the Apostle Answers; he gives them direction to do what this Case required, what was necessary to their Salvation by Christ, and therefore he tells them what they must do to obtain Remission of Sins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. That he does not mean these extraordinary Gifts by these words, *the Gift of the Holy Ghost*, will thus appear: He tells them the Promise of this, and the remission of Sins did belong to them and their Children, *and to as many as were afar off, whom God should call*. He means then such a Gift of the Holy Ghost, as might be expected and obtain'd by all Christians. But these extraordinary Gifts are not to be expected, as we know they are not obtain'd by all Christians. 'Tis certain, all Christians did not at that time, nor ever since that, enjoy these extraordinary Gifts; the Reason is, because they are not necessary to all Christians: They are not necessary to the Salvation of any, and were necessary only to those whom it pleased our Saviour to make use of to publish his Gospel to the World, and who were to deliver and leave in Writing a compleat and sufficient Account of it. They are not necessary after a

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Efficient Promulgation of his Religion, and Confirmation of it by Miracles; and after the compleating of the Canon of Scripture, and therefore are not continued now. The Gift of the Holy Ghost, then, being that which might be obtain'd, as the Apostle signifies, through all Ages of the Church, and by common Christians; in his Saying, the Promise he speaks of, is to all that should be call'd; he must be understood to mean by it, that Gift which makes Men good Christians, which is common to all such, and necessary to their Salvation; that is, the Sanctifying renewing Gift of the Holy Ghost, whereby they are regenerated or born again; and which Gift is bestowed in Baptism according to the State and Capacity of the Subject.

I come now to the second Enquiry which must be Answer'd, to give a right Understanding of these Words, which is, Whom must we reckon this Promise does belong to? Who are they that the Apostle says may be partakers of it? To Answer this is to shew who may be taken into Covenant with God, that Covenant which is established with Jesus Christ, for the relief of fallen Mankind, and which is by him publish'd and offer'd to the World. The *Promise* means, in the full extent of it, the Covenant of Promise, as it is elsewhere call'd; or the things promised in that gracious Covenant, which is made with Jesus Christ for our sakes, and which Mankind are allow'd to come into. And when the Apostle says, the Promise is to such and such, he means those who are specified, might be taken into this Covenant, and might come to have a Right to the promised Mercies of it, because he directs them here what to do, that they may obtain that Right which they might enjoy. It may be observ'd, then, to Answer this Enquiry, That there are Three sorts of Persons distinctly mention'd by the Apostle, who might, by the Course prescribed, attain the Promise, or the promised Favours of the New Covenant: They

They are mention'd in these Words, *To you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

There is no Question made, but that by the Words *to you*, the Apostle means those he spoke to, that is, the *Jews*, who were amazed at what they observ'd in the Apostles, and prick'd in their Hearts at what St. *Peter* said to them, and were in a concern what they must do to avoid the Wrath they had deserved by crucifying the Christ, and to obtain the good Things which were design'd to be offer'd and bestow'd upon them by him. To them the offer of the Covenant had been made of Old Times; and to them he would let them know, it was still continued, notwithstanding this their Guilt which he had told them of: And by Repentance, and taking the Sacrament of Baptism, they might be taken into it, under the present new Dispensation of it.

But the Question here between us and the Adversaries of Infant Baptism is, who are meant here by the Words *your Children*, when the Apostle says, *The Promise is to you, and to your Children.* They would have it, That the Apostle means by this word only, the Posterity of those whom he spoke to, when they should be grown up to Years of Discretion, and should become capable of understanding the propos'd Covenant, and of expressing their consent to it, and engagement in it: They think he meant their Children when they should become Men, not while they were still Children; when they could repent, and could receive the sanctifying Gift of the Holy Ghost, by the Ministry of the Word preached to them. And thus they think this a Text which requires the actual repentance of all those that are Baptised, and which does therefore exclude Infants from being Baptis'd, because they cannot actually repent.

We say on the contrary, that by Children here, the Apostle does, and must needs mean Infant-Children: And how much reason we have to understand him

thus, will appear in what follows ; by which also, the Mistake of these People will be evident, in confining his Meaning to a grown Posterity. We will observe, that the Greek Word used here, does include and signifie Infants as well as a grown Posterity : It properly signifies the Offspring without any Limitation to an Age : And we find the Word used, when we are sure that Infant Children are spoken of, as in *Acts 21. 21.* where 'tis said of *St. Paul*, that he was Accused among the *Jews* of teaching, *That they ought not to circumcise their Children.* The word therefore may mean Infant Children here, unless there be any thing in this Text, or were in any other Scripture, to limit it to a grown Posterity. But as there is nothing here nor elsewhere, that obliges us to give it that limitation here, so we shall see there is very much in the Scripture elsewhere, and even in this Text also, to induce us to believe, that Infant Children were particularly meant, and spoke of by the Apostle in this word here.

According to all the Doctrine of Holy Scripture, Infant Children do need the Promise here mention'd, or the promised Blessings signified ; they need Salvation by Jesus Christ, and they need to be brought into the way of Salvation by him ; to be entred into Covenant with God in and with him ; to be admitted into the Covenant of Grace, which is made with him, and offer'd by him to the World. They need Remission of sin, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost, the particular Benefits of that Covenant which the Apostle here specifies. This has been already prov'd as much as is sufficient to our present Design, and therefore I need not insist upon doing it now.

Again ; As they need, so they are allow'd to partake of this Favour ; God allows them to be brought into this Covenant, and so to come to have a right to Salvation by Christ, and to all the Degrees and Parts of it, and what is necessary towards it. This also has been prov'd : And then the Apostle might

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truly say, and mean it of Infants; *The Promise is to your Children.* These People cannot deny, but the Promise, in this sense, is to Infant Children of those who are themselves in Covenant with God, without denying the possibility of their Salvation by Christ. If they may not be admitted into the Way and Method of Salvation by Christ, they cannot be saved by Christ. But as this were to contradict themselves in their Opinion of the Salvation of Infants, so it were to contradict the Holy Scripture. They cannot deny then but the Apostle might mean Infant-Children here, if the Promise be to them, or they may partake of the promised Mercies in any way. And if we must not understand him meaning Infant Children, it can be only because he could not say truly that the Promise is to them, and this were to put all Infant-Children into a desperate state: It were to say they cannot be Partakers of Salvation by Christ, nor be admitted into the way of Salvation by him; they cannot be brought into Covenant with God in him, which is all false; and therefore it would be false to say that for this Reason the Apostle must not be understood to mean Infant-Children here.

But, as other Scriptures, or the general Doctrine of Holy Scripture concerning Infants, does allow us to understand, that the Apostle might speak of Infant-Children here; so I doubt not but the Text it self obliges us to understand him so, and we must understand he means Infant-Children in this word here. The Apostle spoke these words to those who knew the Promise had been, by God's Order, belonging to Infant-Children, of those that were in Covenant with God. It had so belonged to them also, that they had his Leave and Allowance, yea, his Order and Command to be entered into the same Covenant by the same Method with their Parents. They knew that Infants had been of Old admitted to a right to the Covenanted promised Mercies of God, which are procured for Mankind by

Jesus Christ, If then the Promise does not still belong to Infants under the Christian Dispensation, and so he might not say it did; he ought to have said expressly that it did not, so that this People might not believe and expect it: Or at least he must not have mention'd their Children at all upon this Occasion. To what purpose was it to mention their Children, if the Promise was not now to belong to them. And to mention Children by a word of such a Latitude of signification as might include Infant-Children, as well as a grown Posterity, was to lead them to imagine that the same Privilege belong'd to Infant Children still which did before; that as this Promise had been to them so it might be reckon'd still to belong to them, which if it had been false, the Apostle would not have spoke in such words to this People; who by their Education in the Jewish Church and Religion, must be liable to this Mistake. But we may observe the Apostle is so far from expressing distinctly, to prevent this as a mistake, that the Promise should no longer belong to Infant-Children, that he expresses the quite Contrary here. It is to be observ'd, he does not say the Promise was to you and to your Children, which indeed had been impertinent; but the Promise is to both still. As it is to you, it is to your Children, as you may still be taken into Covenant under the new Dispensation of it, so may likewise your Children: What Priviledge was granted your Children before, is still allow'd them; and therefore as your Infant-Children were formerly, they may still be admitted into Covenant with God, and may have right to the promised Mercies of it: The Promise is to Infant Children still, according to the Apostles express Words, and they may be admitted into Covenant with God in Christ. The Apostles Business and Design in this Expression, was to encourage and move these People to come themselves to Christ; In order to which, it must have a great Force to let them know, that with themselves,
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their Infants also might be receiv'd into Favour with God, as they had been; and therefore he lets them know this in these Words, if it might be: And since we are assur'd by other Scriptures, that it might be, we cannot with any Reason doubt, but the Apostle did design in these Words to let these People know it, and that they did understand him so. It had signified nothing to Induce them to come in to Christ, to tell them that their Posterity, when grown up, might do so; for whether they did this or not, their Posterity, when grown up, might do it as well as all that were afar off whom the Lord should call. He mention'd their Children then, to induce them to come in to Christ, and then he means such Children as would be the better for their coming in to Christ, and that must be Infant-Children: And by the mention of Children, he makes his Argument to be this; that if they would enter into Covenant, their Infant Children might be admitted into Covenant, these might enjoy the same Priviledge. And this made his Argument the stronger to perswade them to come in; whereas it had been no addition to it, and had been but vainly and impertinently done to mention Children at all, if he had meant or design'd to be understood only of a grown Posterity. And thus, I think, 'tis very evident that the Apostle did Mean and Design to signifie Infant Children here, when he said, *The Promise is to you and your Children.*

The Third sort of Persons mention'd here, are those the Apostle speaks of under the Name of *those that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* That is, those that should be converted from among the *Gentiles*, to the Christian Faith. And about these there is no Dispute, only I think fit to add, that if the Apostle did say the Promise is still to Parents and their Children under the New Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, then the Children of

the Gentiles converted to Christianity may as well be receiv'd into Covenant as the Children of the Jews converted to Christianity.

I proceed now to answer the third inquiry propos'd in order to discover the right meaning of this Text of Scripture, which was this ; What means or course does the Apostle here direct to, that those to whom the Promise belong'd might become Partakers of it ? For tho' he says it belong'd to such and such, yet he also says somewhat must be done by them that they may partake of it.

In Answer to this Question it must be said, the Apostle lays down the means and method of their becoming partakers of the promise in these words, *Repent and be Baptised every one of you.* In directing them to do this for the Remission of their Sins, and to obtain the Gift of the Holy Ghost, he directs them to the way and method they must use to obtain the promise mention'd, that is the Favours and Blessings of the New Covenant, because these two things are among the promised Favours and Blessings of the New Covenant.

The Adversaries of Infant-Baptism think they have a mighty Evidence here, that the Children mention'd by the Apostle are not to be understood Infant-Children ; because the Apostle directs what every one, to whom the Promise belongs, must do to obtain it ; and because he directs every one for this to repent and be Baptised ; but Infant-Children could not be urg'd to Repent, for that they cannot actually Repent, as they say they have no need to Repent, having no actual Sin to Repent of ; and therefore they will have it, this Text does not allow Infants to be Baptised, but rather shows they ought not, in that they cannot Repent, they cannot have the Qualification here requir'd in order to Baptism. This is the utmost force of their Objection and Argument from this Scripture. I shall show the Weakness and Mistakes of it in what follows.

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He urges them to Repent here who had been guilty of actual Sins, in order to their obtaining the promised Mercy : But this does not prove that all must Repent to receive and obtain the promised Mercy : For, then, since Infants cannot Repent, they cannot receive the promised Mercy. And thus their Interpretation of this Text runs into that which their Arguments and Objections against Infant-Baptism generally do run to, that is to conclude against the possibility of the Salvation of Infants ; and that even while they profess to believe they may be sav'd without Baptism. If they rightly Interpret this Scripture, then all must repent to whom the Promise belongs ; then the Promise must be said not to belong to Infant-Children, because they cannot Repent : This is the Condition for all of obtaining the Promise, then Infants cannot obtain the Promise ; then this Interpretation is false, or Infants cannot be sav'd. But we have prov'd from Scripture that Infants may partake of the promised Mercies ; therefore 'tis not the Apostle's design to say here what all must do to partake of the promised Mercy, when he says, *Repent and be Baptised*. This does not lay Repentance and Baptism both upon all those that shall partake of the promised Mercy, because some may partake of that who cannot Repent. He says here what must be done by all those that shall partake of the promised Mercy, but does not say that all which is to be done, must be done by all. He does not make both these necessary to all. Here lies the mistake of these people, and they deceive themselves by confining the Apostle's meaning, without reason and contrary to Scripture and to their own belief in another Case, to say, what every one must do that shall obtain the promised Mercy. He says, *Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, &c.* But he does not say, For every one must Repent and be Baptized that shall receive remission of Sins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. He does not say here
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what was necessary to all in order to Baptism, but only what was necessary to those he spoke to ; because if he must be understood also to say what was necessary to all to Baptism, he must be understood so to say all this was necessary to all to obtain the Promise, and this were to exclude Infants from Salvation. He says what was necessary to all grown Persons, but does not mean here only grown persons, because Infants too may obtain the Promise.

Again he directs those whom he spoke to, to Repent and be Baptised, because they being grown Persons, and having been in actual Sin, they had need, and were capable of Repentance ; and in them it was necessary to their Baptism, and so both of these were necessary in them that their Children might come to have a right to the promised Mercy ; for their Children must have right to be brought into Covenant by them, and by their being in Covenant. It was proper and necessary then to urge both these upon them, that they and their Children might come to obtain the promised Mercy, but this does not at all prove that both these are necessary to all that shall receive the promised Mercy, or that if they whom the Apostle spoke to must Repent for this, their Children must Repent too, or not obtain the promised Mercy. He says herein what was necessary to them, but not what was necessary to all, not what was necessary to their Children so as that it must be understood he means both these necessary to their Children. Repentance was necessary to them to their Baptism and obtaining the Promise, but not to their Children, therefore he does not say it, nor confine his Discourse to those of their Children that could Repent, that is their grown Posterity.

Further, When he says both these, Repentance and Baptism, are necessary to their obtaining the Promise to whom it belongs, he must be understood to mean both are necessary to those that are capable of both, not that they are necessary to all, for they are not both necessary

necessary to all. It is to strain the words to say both these are necessary to all, whether they are capable of them or no. And when we know that of these requir'd things Repentance has been accepted alone in a Person who was not capable of being Baptized, as it was from the Thief who was penitent upon the Cross; So we cannot doubt but Baptism may be accepted alone from those who are not capable of Repentance. If both are necessary to the obtaining the promised Mercy, then they must be used by those who are capable of them, then they must Repent and be Baptized who are capable of both, and they must be Baptized at least who are not capable to Repent; and this is all that the Apostle can be rightly understood to mean here, when he says, *Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, &c.*

In thus Explaining this Text and Vindicating, as I think I have done, this Explication, I have prevented myself in the second thing propos'd, which was to take notice how it does justify and urge the Baptizing of Infants: And I doubt not but every Person that were but indifferent must needs see, upon considering what has been said, that this Scripture does sufficiently vindicate the Baptizing of Infants. But because we have to do in this Controversy not with those that are indifferent, but with those that are prejudic'd and actually possess'd with a belief of the unlawfulness of this practice, and I would fain convince them, and bring them to Repentance and Acknowledgment of the Truth, therefore I think it necessary to observe particularly what Evidence there is in this Text for the Lawfulness and Necessity of Administring Baptism to Infants. And we may certainly justify this practice of the Church of God from this Scripture upon these grounds following.

I. It is apparent in this Scripture, agreeably with the rest of Scripture, that the Promise is to Infant-Children of those who are in Covenant; that is, their Infants may be taken into Covenant. Because 'tis evident-

vidently taught us elsewhere, that the Promise belongs to Infants, and they have been manifestly allow'd, and expressly order'd to be admitted into Covenant with God, therefore we may understand the Apostle as speaking of Infant-Children here, and conclude he intended to signify that the Promise was still under the Christian dispensation belonging to them. Indeed our Saviour expressly and fully says this in saying, *Of such is the kingdom of God.* But certainly if the Promise belongs to them, the common appointed way and mean of partaking the Promise, must be reckon'd appointed and allow'd to them also. What means they are capable of, belongs and may be applied to them. And since Baptism is by the Apostle here mention'd as a means to obtain the Promise, and he says the Promise belongs to them; he does therein manifestly teach us that Baptism, which is now the common appointed mean, does belong to them. If there is an appointed mean of partaking the Promise, and any sort of Persons may not make use of such a mean, it cannot be said the Promise is to them, or belongs to them, the excluding them from the mean is an excluding them from the Promise. Therefore when the Apostle says expressly, the Promise is to them, and expressly urges to Baptism as a mean of obtaining it, he does sufficiently declare they may make use of this mean to obtain it: Then he does sufficiently declare they may be Baptised, and this is from thence undoubtedly lawful. If they are withheld from the means, they are withheld from the good things which are to be enjoy'd by those means; if they are not withheld from the good things, they are certainly not withheld from the means. If the Promise belongs to Children, the means they are capable of must belong to them too. We cannot reasonably think the Apostle would at the same time urge Baptism as a mean of partaking the Promise, and say the Promise belongs to Infants without adding something to prevent the belief that this mean belongs to them also, if this were a mistake

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especially since it is so easy and natural to gather this from his words. We cannot doubt then but it is no mistake to gather from these words of the Apostle, that Infants may be Baptized.

2. It is apparent by this Text, that Baptism is a common appointed way and mean of obtaining the Promise. When he says, *be Baptised for remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*, he manifestly urges this as commonly necessary to obtain remission of Sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost: If this be commonly necessary, 'tis necessary to Infants. If they need remission of Sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and Baptism is the ordinary appointed means of conferring these, then they need Baptism to make them partakers of these. If any mean and method be appointed by our Lord of obtaining the promised Mercy, 'tis presumption to expect the Promise for our selves or Infants, but in the use of the ordinary appointed means, and especially together with the wilful neglect and contempt of the means.

We see here Baptism directed to by an Apostle as the universal method and mean of entering into Covenant with God. All are directed to be Baptised, that they may obtain the Promise, therefore Infants must be Baptised, that they may obtain the Promise. It cannot be said Repentance is here requir'd of all those that shall obtain the Promise, therefore all must Repent that shall do so, because all they are not capable to Repent who may obtain the Promise; Infants may obtain the Promise tho' they cannot Repent. And there is certainly no more requir'd of those to whom the Promise belongs in order to their obtaining it, than what they are capable of; and when several things are requir'd in order to their obtaining the Promise to whom it belongs, 'tis evident each sort must do what they are capable of. Therefore since Infants are capable of Baptism, they must needs be Baptised to obtain the Promise. If the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism would say Children shall partake of the Promise

mise by their Parents Baptism, this is proved false before, when we prov'd and stated the grounds of Infant-Baptism ; and 'tis indeed contrary to the nature and state of the Covenant, both under the Jewish and Christian Dispensation of it. As the Covenant was propos'd to *Abraham*, and establish'd with his Family, in *Gen. 17.* we may say that altho' the Promise was to *Abraham* and his Infant-Children, yet they were not to be partakers of it but by using the Sacrament which was the ordinary appointed way and mean of partaking of it. In like manner our Saviour has made Baptism of the same necessity and use with respect to the present Dispensation of the New Covenant, in saying, *Except a man be born again of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Which shews that still they who may partake of the Promise must come to do so in such a way, and by the use of such a Sacrament as is the mean appointed to bring all Persons to this. So that if we compare this with other places of Scripture, we must needs conclude the Apostle did design to teach the Jews here, and us with them, that as those he spoke to must be Baptised to partake of the promised Mercy, notwithstanding that the Promise belong'd to them ; so their Children must be Baptised likewise to obtain it notwithstanding that it belong'd to them. No reason can be assign'd why the one must be Baptised to obtain it, and not the other, the Parents and not the Children, when 'tis established for all : Be Baptised for the Promise is to you and your Children, does necessarily signify, then you and your Children may, and both must be Baptised, to partake of the Promise. All must, by the Apostle's Direction here, Repent that need and are capable of Repentance, and all must be Baptised that are capable of Baptism ; and then certainly Infants must be Baptised to obtain the Promise, and this he teaches us here. It cannot be said the grown Persons to whom he spoke must needs be Baptised, to obtain the Promise, but their Children might obtain it with-

without Baptism : For as he evidently urges Baptism to those to whom the Promise belongs, he urges it upon all to whom the Promise belongs as a means to obtain it, because 'tis a means all are capable of. He urges that Infants should be Baptised, in urging all to be Baptised to whom the Promise belongs, in adding to the same words that the Promise belongs to Infants.

3. As the Apostles words were an Argument to induce the Jews to embrace the Christian Faith, they are an Argument to urge and justify the Baptising of Infants. They prove it to be at least allow'd and lawful. It must be granted that the Apostle design'd in these words to perswade the Jews to embrace the Christian Faith. In order to this, he tells them that not only themselves, but also their Infant-Children, might partake of the Promise. For if he had meant only their grown Posterity here, the mention of Children had not strengthened at all his Argument ; because the belonging of the Promise to them not depending upon the Repentance or Baptism of these whom he spoke to, if the Promise does truly belong only to a grown Posterity, it could be no Argument to induce and move these to Repentance and Baptism. But if he may be understood to mean Infants in this word, this does strengthen his Argument, for it must be by the Repentance and Faith of the Parents and their Baptism that the Promise would belong to Infant-Children, that is that they might be partakers of it in the appointed way. And then if the Promise belong'd to them they might be partakers of it by Baptism : And he must needs intend to let these people know that the means of partaking the Promise which they were capable of, might be administered to their Infants. The Apostle could not convince the Jews that the Promise belong'd to their Infants, but would rather have made them doubt it, in urging to Repentance and Baptism as means of partaking of the Promise, if this Sacrament might not be administered to Infants ; for he had then urg'd two things as necessary to this, one of which their Infants

Infants were incapable of, and the other was not allow'd them; and this would have weakned instead of strengthening the Argument whereby he would have perswaded them to come in to Christ. He says the Promise belongs to Infant-Children, and prescribes the Sacrament of Admission to be used for obtaining it, which is establish'd under the Christian Dispensation, and he adds nothing more to convince these People that the Promise belong'd to them and their Children, and might be obtain'd by the common Sacrament, because it was needless to add more, in that he spoke to people who knew that in the Jewish Church Infants had been admitted into Covenant, as well as their Parents, by the Sacrament; and 'tis very likely he thought it needless to add any thing more to confirm what he said, because these People had observed and seen that the Infants of Believing and Baptised Parents, were wont to be Baptised and admitted into the Christian Church, the number of Disciples, as well as their Parents. If the Apostle had known Infants might not be Baptised, he would have let these People know it; and then he would have express'd that they might by some other way obtain the Promise when he said it belong'd to them. But when he urges to Baptism as a mean to obtain this for those to whom it belongs, and says in the same breath that it belongs to Infants, but gives no intimation of any other way that it should be obtained by them, he plainly signifies that they might in this way obtain it. This People he spoke to must needs gather from his words, that their Infants might in this way obtain it, and must use this method, the applying to them the Sacrament appointed by our Lord, and urg'd in this Text, since they had known that Infants before this might, and must, use the appointed means to obtain the Promise. And if the case were altered under the Gospel, the Apostle would not by so general an Expression of this matter have led them into such an Error. It is therefore most certainly no Error that Infants may be Baptised, but a Truth prov'd from this Text of Scripture, and is manifestly allow'd by the Apostles Doctrine here.

C H A P. V.

Wherein is explained and improved to the justifying of *Infant Baptism* the Text in 1 Cor. 7. 14.

For the Unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the Wife, and the Unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the Husband: Else were your Children unclean, but now are they Holy.

AS it has pleas'd the great Saviour of Mankind to dispense his Salvation always in a prescrib'd way and method, and has given sufficient Intimations, that even Infants may be sav'd by Him as well as grown Persons, he has not left them out of his Care, nor abandon'd them to remediless Perdition; so it must follow from hence, that such a Way and Method of Salvation is establish'd as they may be admitted to, such as may take them in. It is enough with the Adversaries of their Baptism to believe they may be sav'd by Jesus Christ tho' they know not how or in what way this should be; and this they will not know, tho' there is a common Way and Method appointed which Infants may be brought into, because they will not believe that they are to be sav'd in that Way. Till the Adversaries of their Baptism can shew us in Scripture another way of Salvation by Christ appointed for Infants, beside the common one, or that it is expressly said they cannot, shall not be sav'd in the common way, we must believe they are to be sav'd in the common appointed way, and must apply and use that to them, and may justly do so, since we believe they may be sav'd. And as we have no Ground or Intimation in Scripture to dispose us to believe, that a peculiar uncommon way is design'd for them, and we have no good reason or ground to conclude, they can-

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not be sav'd in the common appointed way and method ; so we have very good ground and sufficient intimation, that they may be sav'd in the common way, and that the ordinary appointed method is design'd to take in them as well as others. As indeed, if this might be done, it might be expected, that in Holy Scripture there should be sufficient intimation of it and ground for it. And if it might not be done, there must have been very evident and clear intimations, even express mention, that they might not be sav'd in the common way, or another way must have been evidently appointed for them, since it is evidently said they may be sav'd, otherwise the Holy Scripture had not been, as it is, a perfect Rule of Faith and Practice. We must needs believe and expect they are to be sav'd in the common appointed way when 'tis said they may be sav'd, and is not said, they cannot or shall not be sav'd in that way ; nor is any other way of Salvation for them reveal'd or establish'd, if we take the Holy Scripture for a perfect Rule. But besides this, we have, as hath been said, sufficient intimation in Holy Scripture, that we may, and that we ought to bring our Infants into the common method and way of Salvation by Christ, which is now the Sacrament of Baptism : We have sufficient intimation of this, there, in the Grounds and Foundation of it laid in several Doctrines unquestionably deliver'd there, and also in several particular Texts where we are distinctly and evidently taught this. I do not propose to mention and use all those particular Texts in this Work, but to mention enough to make out this Assertion, and shall therefore at present use no more than this which I have last referr'd to.

To make it appear, that the Practice of the Church of God in Baptizing of Infants is justified from this Text of Scripture, I shall first propose and vindicate the right Interpretation of it, and then shew how it affords us the Justification of this Practice.

To give a right Interpretation of this Scripture and prove it, I must take notice upon what occasion, and to what purpose these words were spoken by the Apostle; and then I must particularly explain some Expressions among them, and the latter of these must be directed and may be assisted by the former.

The occasion, then, upon which these words were spoken, was this, as will appear by the rest of this Chapter. In the beginnings of Christianity, when the Gospel was first preach'd among the Jews or Heathens, it was usual to come to pass, That a Wife was converted to Christianity while her Husband remain'd still an Infidel; or perhaps a Husband became a Convert while the Wife remained such. When the Case was such, it became a Question among the new Christians, Whether or no the Believer might live as an Husband or Wife with the Unbeliever, or whether they were bound to depart from them, whether or no such a conjunction might not defile and prophane the Believer and be displeasing to Almighty God. This Question arose without doubt by the Jewish Converts, who might believe themselves, and perswade others, that the Believer ought to depart from the Unbeliever. And they might be led into this opinion by the belief and practice of the Jewish Church in former times, in somewhat a like case, which we may see was agreeing with this in the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*. For we find in the Book of *Ezra*, that it is lamented as a disorder and sin which provok'd Almighty God against them, that *the Holy seed* (as the people of *Israel* are call'd) *mingled themselves with the people of the Lands*, that is, the Heathen Nations, among whom they liv'd, *Ezra* 9. 2. And in the Book of *Nehemiah* we see they thought themselves oblig'd to separate themselves from those of the Heathen Nations whom they had been married to, *Neb.* 9. 2. This Judgment of such a case, and the separation which they made hereupon, seems to be grounded upon that

Law given by *Moses*, *Exod. 34.* where they are bid to *make no Covenant with the Inhabitants of the Land into which they were going, and not to mingle in Marriages with them*, v. 12, 16. which Law is again repeated, *Deut. 7. 3.* Now the first Christians seeing the Christian Church form'd in many things by the Apostles, after the Model of the Jewish one, and observing it collected into one Body by a Sacrament, as that had been, they might be liable and apt to think, especially the Jewish Converts, and such as were under any Influence from them, that they lay under the same Obligation in this matter, which the Jews had been under, and from thence this Scruple arose, Whether a Believing Husband or Wife were not defiled by living as an Husband or Wife with an Unbeliever, and were not therefore bound to separate themselves and depart from the Unbeliever? The Apostle sets himself to remove this Scruple from the Minds of those who were concern'd in it. And to that purpose he lets them know, That the Believer was not bound to withdraw or separate from the Unbeliever; but if the Unbeliever were still willing, they should live together. He says (in v. 12.) *If any Brother hath a Wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And (v. 13.) the Woman which hath an Husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.* And having given this direction in the case, he proceeds to give them some good reasons to enforce and recommend it, the one of which is taken from the Children of such a Match, which we have in this 14th Verse; the other from the Advantage which their living together might prove to the Unbeliever, which is suggested in the 16th Verse of the Chapter. This is a full account of the Occasion of the Apostle's Discourse here, and of the Connexion of these words which are to be under our present Consideration, and from hence we may direct our selves in the Explication of them.

I proceed in the next place to explain distinctly such parts of the Text as need it, that we may rightly understand and apply it; because the Adversaries of Infant Baptism do by several misinterpretations of this Text hinder the unhappy People of their Sect from being convinced of their Error, as they might be, from this Text of Scripture. I must then distinctly represent, (1.) What is meant by this, That the Unbelieving Husband is *sanctified* by the Wife, and the Wife by the Husband. (2.) What the Apostle means in saying, *Else were your Children unclean*. (3.) What he means in those words, *But now are they Holy*.

First, Let us see what the Apostle must be reckon'd to mean in saying, *The Unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the Wife, and the Unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the Husband*.

Now, to be sanctified, we know, means to be set apart, and consecrated or devoted to God: This the unbelieving Husband might be by the believing Wife, either in his person or in his use as a Husband. If he were sanctified in his person it must be thus: The Instructions, and Perswasions, and endearing Obligations of his believing Wife must bring him at length to be a Believer too, and to be consecrated to God in his own person by Baptism; so he might be said to be sanctified by her as she became a means of his Sanctification. And the coming to pass of this sometimes, and the hopes that it might come to pass again, were a very good reason for the Believer to dwell with the Unbeliever if she might; and this is the reason urg'd for it in the 16th Verse. But this does not seem to be the meaning of the Apostle here; because he is here giving a reason why the believing Wife should still live with her Husband, tho' he remain'd an Unbeliever: And because he says, *Else were your Children unclean*, for the Children would not be unclean tho' the Unbeliever were not thus sanctified by the Believer: The Children would not be unclean tho' one of the Pa-

rents remained an Unbeliever, and this is what the Apostle apparently design'd to observe to them.

We must then understand the Apostle as meaning, that the unbelieving Husband was sanctified by the believing Wife as a Husband, not as a Man, and in his use as such, not in his person. He was consecrated or set apart to God by the believing Wife in her use of him as an Husband. And this was because by vertue of his having a believing Wife the Children which were produced of such a Marriage were in a peculiar manner belonging to God: He begat Children to God, as may be said, because they had by their believing Mother a right to be devoted to him, and brought into Covenant with him, and so were to be reckon'd his in a manner peculiar, and different from all other Children that had no such Parent. This Interpretation perfectly agrees with the Reason which the Apostle gives to prove the thing, when he says, *Else were your Children unclean*, as will more fully appear when I come to give an account of that.

But before I come to that I must take notice of one poor shift which these People make use of to evade the force of this Scripture. They say the Apostle's words mean and should be translated thus; The Unbeliever is sanctified to the Believer, as other things are sanctified to a Believer, which he enjoys; according to that Scripture, *To the pure all things are pure*; so that they will have the sense to be, the unbelieving Husband is sanctified, that is, he is lawfully used or enjoy'd as a Husband by his Wife, and without their being guilty of Fornication.

In answer to which these things may be said, and which prove this Interpretation false and groundless.

It may be observ'd, we are under no Obligation, there is no necessity to interpret the Greek word here by the word *to*. It is usual with the *New Testament* by such a way of expressing as is here used concerning the believing Husband or Wife, to speak of that by

which

which a thing is done. So in *Matt. 3. 11.* St. John says to the Multitudes concerning himself and our Saviour, *I indeed baptize you with Water, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire.* There the Greek word is applied to that by which the thing spoken of was done, and is therefore fitly enough rendred *with*; as here the Unbeliever is said to be sanctified by the Believer as the person by whom this was done. In like manner our Saviour speaks of *Solomon* in all his glory, *Matt. 6. 29.* as his glory was that by or with which he was array'd. The same Phrase is used, *Eph. 3. 13.* where the Apostle desires that the *Ephesians* might not faint at his Tribulations for them, which is, to speak of his Tribulations as what they might be discouraged by.

Further, The following words which are given as a Reason and Proof of this Assertion, forbid us to understand the Apostle as they would have us, when he says to prove, that *the Unbeliever is sanctified by the Believer, else were your Children unclean*, he says this as a proof of the former Assertion, and then we must not doubt but it was a good proof of it: And then we must interpret both Expressions so as that this latter may appear a proof of the former. But 'tis easie to see, that if the Apostle be understood as saying, *the Unbeliever is sanctified to the Believer*, that which he says of the Children of such a Match is no proof of it. By saying, *Else were your Children unclean*, he means, that if one Parent were a Believer the Children were not unclean; But to say this is only to assert the same thing which he had said before, and not to prove it: he had said, the unbelieving Parent is not unclean because the Children are not unclean, or because the Children are sanctified to you. The mention of the Children in this case had been vain and needless. As it is false to say the Apostle design'd to tell these People, that if either Husband or Wife were a Believer this did make their living together to be

honest and lawful Wedlock and no Fornication, so it had been impertinent and vain to mention the Children as he does for proof of this, because it had been no proof. This foolish Interpretation makes the Apostle say, If it were not that your living with an Unbeliever were a lawful Wedlock your Children would be Bastards, but no Man can imagine certainly what need or reason the Apostle could have to mention the Children in that case, if that were the Sence of the former Expression.

Further, We may say, 'tis true, the unbelieving Relation was sanctified to the Believer, but what the Apostle says here he brings as a Reason why they should live together, and then he doth not mean, that the one being a Believer made their Co-habitation lawful, for their Co-habitation might be lawful tho' they were both Unbelievers; and then he would not bring this as a Reason why they should live together; for it had been a false Reason, or false as a Reason for what he had brought it to prove, because their Co-habitation had not been dishonest if they had both continued Heathens, it was not the being of one of them a Believer that made the Co-habitation lawful and honest Wedlock. The Apostle would never have said, The unbelieving Husband was sanctified by the Wife, that is, the believing Wife, or by the Wife as a Believer, because in this Sense of being sanctified, the unbelieving Husband had been sanctified by the Wife tho' she had been an Unbeliever too. Thus much may suffice, I think, to show to any one that will fairly consider it, that this is a very false and forced Interpretation of the Apostle's words, and indeed a poor shift to maintain a bad Cause.

But I shall evidence yet further the right Interpretation of that Passage in the Text which we have been considering, by explaining, as we are directed in Scripture to do it, the second Passage which I proposed to explain, which is, *Else were your Children unclean.*

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We may learn how we may understand this from the New Testament, and from the sense of the Apostle *Peter* as discover'd there. And we shall find that the Notion or sense which he had of it was this: That a person who might be accounted unclean was one who might not be taken into the Church of God, he might not be admitted into the Body of Christ, we may see by the 10th of the *Acts*, that he thought this at that time of those of the Heathen Nations, and that he accounted them unclean in this sense. Therefore he was taught by a Vision that some of them might be so cleansed by the immediate operation of the Spirit of God upon them, as to be worthy and fit for admission into the Church of God. It was said to him in a vision, *That call not thou common*, that is unclean, (15. verse.) This was said, as the Vision was afforded him, to encourage him to goe to the Good Centurion at *Cæsarea* who was a Roman Souldier but a devout, good man, and one that acknowledged the true God, and whom God had directed at this time to send for *Peter* that he might by him be taught the Christian Religion, and be admitted into the Christian Church by Baptism. It was said to signifie that God had cleansed this good Heathen by the Influence of his Spirit upon him and made him worthy and fit for this. Accordingly this was prov'd to St. *Peter* when he was come to him, and had been a little while preaching the Gospel to him, and a select company of his friends whom he had got together upon this occasion. For besides the appearance there was among them of their being Religious and good Persons, and such as enjoy'd a good measure of the Common and Sanctifying gift of the Holy Spirit, he saw they had now some of the extraordinary gifts afforded them, for *they spake with tongues, and magnified God*, 'tis said, ver. 46. that is, they spake with languages which they had never learnt, and they spake great things of God which they could not know but by immediate inspiration

ration and teaching of the Holy Ghost. Upon this St. Peter doubted no longer of their being cleansed by God, or of their being fit and worthy to be admitted into the Church of God. *Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord,* 'tis said in ver. 47, 48. The thing he had before feared was their uncleanness, but that being evidently done away, God having cleansed them, they appear'd now such as might be baptized. By this History we see that to be unclean in the sense of the Apostles and under the Christian dispensation is those who may not be admitted into the Church of God, such as might not be baptized.

This Notion of the Cleanness or Uncleanness of any Person was Suitable to that of the Jewish Church, and of the old Religion of the Jews, which St. Peter had been Educated in. Those of the Heathen Nations were accounted by them unclean, and such as might not be admitted into the Jewish Church which was then the Church of Christ; till it appear'd that God had cleansed them by giving them convictions of the Errour and Sin of their Idolatry, and bringing them to repent of that, and to a hearty willingness to embrace the true Religion. The grown persons among the Heathens were to be found thus cleansed. But when they were circumcised and admitted into the Church of God their Children might also be circumcised, which shews that upon this their Children became not unclean. These had by their Parents a right to this Sacrament, and to admission by it into the Church of God, and then they ceased to be in this sense unclean. We see God himself commanding that when any from among the Heathen Nations were joyn'd by Circumcision to the Church of God, their Infants might in the same way be joyn'd to it likewise. 'Tis said, *Exod. 12. 48.* when a Stranger

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that should sojourn in the Land of *Israel* should have a desire to keep the Passover, *all his males must be circumcised, and then he might come near, and keep it.* When himself was circumcised all his Males might be circumcised. He was qualified for Circumcision or admission into the Jewish Church by his own Faith and Repentance, and his Infants were qualified by his actual admission; this gave them a right to admission, and they were thereupon no longer unclean.

There were other cases of Uncleanness according to the account of the Jewish Law, but they were such as were consistent with being actually a Member of the Church, and with a right to their cleansing Ordinances. 'Tis true, while those legal Uncleannesses were upon them they were separated from the Congregation of the Lord; but under those Uncleannesses they had right, and order to use such Ceremonies as were appointed to cleanse them. The Apostle therefore must be understood to mean another sort of Uncleanness here, even the greatest of all, that which rendered a person unworthy of admission into the Church of God, such as the Heathen Nations were reputed to be under, both the grown persons and their Children, till the grown persons were cleansed by the inward Sanctification of the Spirit, and devoted to God by the appointed Sacrament, upon which this uncleanness was done away from their Infants too.

In this sense then we may understand the Apostle *Paul* in this Text under our present consideration, when he says, *Else were your Children unclean*, to the case of one Parent being a Believer, and admitted by the Sacrament into the Church of God: He means, if one Parent be a Believer the Children are not unclean; that is, they have right to admission into the Church of God. Those that are unclean have no right to be admitted into the Church of God, and if
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both Parents were Unbelievers, he intimates the Children would be unclean; but these who had one Parent a Believer were not so, but might be admitted into the Church of God. The Primitive Christian Church appear to have understood this case thus. For they did never baptize the Infants whose Parents were both Infidels, unless those Infants did in a sort become the Infants of Christians, which they were reckon'd to do upon their Adoption by Christians, or if they were born of their Slaves whom they had bought with their Money, if they were taken away from the disposal of the Heathen Parents, and became entirely at the disposal of a Christian.

I come now in the third place to explain and shew, what the Apostle means in saying of the Children he is speaking of, *Now are they holy*. He says the Children who had but one Parent a Believer were holy. The right sense of this shall be stated and vindicated in the following particulars, and then I shall shew the apparent mistake of that sense which the Adversaries of Infant Baptism put upon it.

1. We are to learn, as we may, from Holy Scripture, that every thing which is not unclean is not therefore Holy. It is not the Manner of Scripture to account that every thing is holy which is not unclean; there must goe something more towards the making that Thing or Person Holy which is not unclean, besides its being not unclean. And therefore we must not understand the Appostle as saying the same thing of these Children twice but only in different words: But by saying they are *not Unclean* he means one thing, by saying *they are Holy*, he saies what includes that, and somewhat more. Every thing that is Holy must be not Unclean, it must become so in order to be Holy, but every thing that is not Unclean is not therein Holy. This will be easily understood if we observe, that the Law of God given to the Jewish Church made a difference between things clean and unclean, which

which was this. Those that were clean might be offer'd and devoted to God, but not any of the things which were unclean might be so. Now when the things that were clean, and might be offer'd to God, were actually offer'd, then they became Holy, but not before. They in Being *not Unclean* were such as might be offer'd to God, and when they were actually devoted and offer'd, then they became *Holy*. In one Chapter we see what was actually offer'd and devoted to God is several times call'd a Holy thing, as in *Levit. 22.* which is fully spoken in ver. 15. especially, where Moses saies to them, *And thou shalt not profane the Holy things of the Children of Israel which they offer to the Lord.* The Scripture then teaches us that what is Holy is that which is actually devoted or offer'd to God. And thus *things* put on what is call'd a Relative Holiness; they were holy as peculiarly related or belonging to God, when they were devoted or consecrated to him. And *Persons* may become federally Holy, that is, devoted to God to lead a Religious and a good life, to serve and Honour God in in living according to his Commands, and thus Infants may become Holy.

2. The Apostle does not mean here, that if one of the Parents was a Believer the Children would from thence derive an inherent Holiness: He does not mean that a good man can propagate his Goodness, that every thing which is born of a Saint is a Saint. The Holy Scripture does abundantly contradict this; *David* the Son of Religious Parents says of himself, that in *Sin* did his *Mother conceive him*, and he was *shapen in Iniquity*. And the Apostle *Paul* speaking of the common state of Humane Nature says of both *Jew* and *Gentile*, that by Nature they are *all under Sin*, *Rom. 3. 9, &c.* But those that were born of Jewish Parents were born of those who were entred into Covenant with God, and some of them possess'd with Inherent Holiness. And our Saviour speaks this
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matter fully in *John 3. 6.* where he says, *that which is born of the flesh is flesh*; meaning by the flesh that is born, the corrupted state of Humane Nature; and by being born of Flesh he means the common natural birth of Mankind. The natural birth derives but a corrupted nature, and therefore all persons that have an Inherent Holiness must have been born again, and born of the Spirit, to have that. It is evident then, if we will interpret the Scripture by it self, that the Apostle does not mean here, that if one Parent were a Believer, the Children would from that Parent derive an Inherent Holiness.

3. Neither does the Apostle mean, that the Children were federally Holy, and actually devoted to God barely by virtue of their being born of a Believing Parent: this does not make them actually devoted to God. Infants do not derive a federal Holiness from their Parents who are in Covenant with God, because they are not by their natural birth themselves reckon'd in Covenant with God for their Parents being so. This too our Saviour evidently teaches in saying, *All must be born again that they may enter into the Kingdom of God.* If by being born of Parents in Covenant, Infants were also in Covenant with God, then they must be reckon'd born within the Kingdom of God; but that none are according to our Saviour's decision of the Case, because all have need to be born again, of a new birth to bring them into the Kingdom of God. There must have been something else therefore added to the making these Children Holy, besides what they could derive from a Believing Parent; though that which was to be added moreover, and was added, they derived a right to from the Believing Parent.

4. When the Apostle says, then, that the Children who had one Parent a Believer were holy, he means at least they were federally holy, but must be understood to mean they were become so by having had the

the Sacrament of Baptism administred to them. They must be federally holy at least, that is, engag'd and devoted to be holy, to live to God, that they might deserve to be called Holy: but they could no other way become so, therefore it must have been in this way. This Interpretation agrees perfectly with the Discourse which these words are joyn'd to, and with the Interpretation of the other parts of the Text. If one Parent were a Believer the Children were *not unclean*; that is, they had right to be devoted and offered to God, they might be consecrated and offered to him, this was deriv'd from the Believing Parent; and then having thus a right to be offer'd to God, and being not Unclean, they were actually offer'd to God in their Baptism, and so became actually *Holy*, that is, federally so; being therein engaged, and bound, and devoted to live a religious and good life. Our Saviour himself has appointed and declared this Sacrament to be the common rite, and ceremony, and means of devoting persons to God, and entring them into the Kingdom of Heaven; which is the same thing, when he said *All must be born of Water and of the Spirit, to be born again and to enter into the Kingdom of God.* And the appointed form of administering Baptism speaks it a Ceremony design'd to devote us to God; in that we must be baptized *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Baptism then is the way of our becoming federally holy, and no persons, especially while Infants, can in any other way according to Christ's rule and order become so. Therefore when the Apostle says of any Children they are Holy, he must be understood to mean that this Ceremony and Sacrament had been administred to them. These words can have no other meaning put upon them if we will interpret them as we ought by the Evident Doctrine of Holy Scripture.

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And that they may have this meaning here, that the Apostle may be understood to call these Children Holy upon the account of their having been offer'd, devoted, to God in Baptism, will be further manifest thus. It is the manner of Holy Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, to call those persons Holy who were by an appointed Sacrament devoted to God. The people of *Israel* are called Holy upon the account of their being devoted to God by a Sacrament, particularly in *Deut.* 14. 2. and in *Ezra* 9. 2. They are called so in general, though not all, nor perhaps the most of them were inherently holy: It must mean they were federally so in that they were offered to God and engaged to be so. In like manner the Apostle *Peter* speaks of the Christian Church, *1 Pet.* 2. 9. *Ye are (says he) a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation.* In the Epistles of *S. Paul* we find him calling all the Christians, in general, of those Churches which he wrote to, by the Name of Saints, and Holy. It is without doubt that some of these were not possess'd with Inherent Holiness. He gives such an account of disorders in the Church of *Corinth*, which yet he calls Holy, as does sadly demonstrate there must be a great many in it that were not Inherently so. There were carnal Contentions among them, and Schisms, and Divisions, and Fornication; and they went to the Lord's Supper some of them disorder'd with excess of eating and drinking. When therefore such a Church in general are call'd Holy, and Saints, it can mean no more than that they were all federally so, they had been consecrated to God in Baptism, and therein bound and engag'd to Holiness and good Living. Because, then, we find the Holy Scripture, and even this Apostle elsewhere, giving the title of Holy to them whom we cannot reckon, of many of them, that they were any otherwise so than as they were baptized, and so engag'd and devoted to a holy and good

good Life; therefore we may understand him speaking of these Infants as Holy upon that account.

It may justifie this Interpretation of the word yet further, that we find the first Christian Writers, and those who liv'd nearest the Apostles, and who may be supposed best to know in what sense the Apostles used the expressions in their Writings, commonly speaking of Baptism under the Name of Sanctification, as that which made the baptized person Holy, which it must do at least as devoting him to God, or engaging him to live a holy and good Life.

I shall now conclude what will be said in explication of this passage, with removing the false interpretation which the Adversaries give of the word *Holy* here. They say by these words, *Now are your Children Holy*, the Apostle means, now are they Lawfully begotten, or are Legitimate. As if he should say, If one Parent be a Believer then your Children are not Bastards, they are the fruits of a just and lawful Matrimony or Wedlock. But if this Interpretation were true, it might be said that Unless one Parent were a Believer the Children were Bastards; or if both Parents were Unbelievers their Wedlock were not honest or Lawful Wedlock, it were no better than Living in Fornication, but this is not true. For the Marriages of the Heathen were lawful and true Marriages, and those that kept them inviolate were not accounted to live in Fornication. And, then, if the Children might not be said to be unlawfully begotten or to be Bastards tho' both Parents were Unbelievers, the Apostle would not say or mean that by vertue of one Parent being a Believer they were not Bastards, because it was not by vertue of this that they were not Bastards. Therefore most certainly it is not the Apostles meaning here that they were lawfully begotten, in his saying they were Holy. 'Tis true they were lawfully begotten, if begotten in a Lawful and honest Wedlock, but this was not because one of the Parents was become a

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Believer, therefore this cannot be the Apostles meaning in his saying they were holy because one Parent was a Believer. He can reasonably be understood, then, to mean nothing else than that these Children, having had a right to be devoted to God by virtue of having one Parent a Believer, they had therefore been actually devoted to God in Baptism.

Having now stated I think very clearly, and fully prov'd and vindicated the right interpretation of this Scripture, I have already done much of the second part of what I propos'd, which was to shew how we may from hence Justifie the Baptizing of Infants. It is easy for any one who will but fairly and impartially consider what has been said, to see what encouragement this Text gives to this practise of the Church of God, and that it contains enough to justifie it from the common Imputations of the Adversaries as unlawful and novel, and not of Apostolick Recommendation. But that I may the better convince the gainsayers, I shall observe there are these two Arguments for this practice manifestly afforded us in this Text (1.) The Apostle plainly asserts and teaches here that the Infants of a believing and baptized Parent have right to be baptized. (2.) By the Apostles words here it is very evident that Infants were ordinarily in the Apostles time baptized. Upon a little reflection it will be easy for any one, that will, to see these two Arguments for this practice in the Text.

1. I say, the Apostle plainly asserts and teaches here that the Infants of a believing and baptized Parent have right to be baptized. He says this in saying they are *not unclean*. The whole Scripture indeed represents all men as conceiv'd and born in sin; even those that are born of religious and devoted Parents are involv'd in this common calamity; and yet the Apostle says here the Children of such Parents are not unclean. This seeming contradiction cannot be reconcil'd but by observing there are two sorts of Uncleaness

cleanness, and we find the Scripture it self, as has been shown, gives us this account of the matter. There is an uncleanness consistent with a right and priviledge to enjoy any ordinance appointed for cleansing Men; and there is such an uncleanness as might not enjoy or use a cleansing Ordinance. And this being so it must be said the Apostles meaning in this expression is, that the Infants of a believing Parent have such an uncleanness as to need a cleansing Ordinance, but not such an one as might not use a cleansing Ordinance. They are unclean with an uncleanness parallel to the legal pollutions under the Jewish Law in this, that with it they have right and allowance to enjoy a cleansing Ordinance: but they are not under the uncleanness of the Heathens who might not enjoy those Ordinances the legal Baptisms. In this sense they are *not unclean*: They have right to enjoy the Ordinance of Christian Baptism. We have here the Apostles word for it, or rather 'tis said by the Spirit of God, who spake by the Apostles to the Christian Church, as well as by the Prophets to that of the Jews, that the Children who have one Parent a Believer are in God's account not unclean, therefore they have right to the Sacrament of Baptism. They have right to that Ordinance which admits persons into the Church and that is Baptism. If they are not unclean the Sacrament of Baptism though a holy Ordinance is not too holy to be administred to them. Those whom God has cleansed, that is, whom he has been pleas'd to allow and account clean enough to have such an Ordinance administred to them we are not to account common or unclean. Those whom he will accept and receive into his Church we need not reject: It is no sin to baptize such and admit them thereby into his Church.

But on the other hand, 'tis a sin to withhold them from coming to Christ whom he allows to come to him; 'tis a sin to keep them out of the Church whom

he allows to be admitted into it : To keep them from the Kingdom of God who our Saviour expressly tells us may be admitted into the Kingdom of God. 'Tis the sin of cruelty to those wretched Infants whom they refuse and neglect to put into a state of Salvation. It is a sin of Impiety against God to refuse and neglect the dedicating them to him whom he is willing and has order'd should be dedicated to him, to refuse to make him the offering which he allows and requires. And to hold and teach that this is unlawful is the sin of adding to the word of God. It is to forbid what he has not forbidden, and is the adding a Negative Command to the Commands of God.

2. Another Argument afforded by this Scripture to Justifie the Baptizing of Infants is ; That by the Apostles words here it appears they were admitted to Baptism in the time of the Apostles ; He says the Children of a believing Parent were Holy : this must mean at least a federal Holiness ; they were holy as solemnly consecrated and devoted to God. The appointed way in the Christian Church to become so was then, as still, the Sacrament of Baptism ; Infants cannot become so by any other way, they cannot take upon them the engagement to be his, and to love, honour and serve him, but in taking the Sacrament of Baptism : Therefore when the Apostle says they were holy, he does as much as say they were baptized.

When the Apostle says to encourage the Believer to dwell with the Unbeliever, and to prove that this might lawfully be, that If one Parent were not a Believer the Children were unclean, but now are they Holy : He says what these people did understand and know to prove to them and satisfy them about that which they did not understand. But they could not know that the Children of such a match were not unclean in the Sight of God, but by observing that they were ordinarily admitted to baptism ;

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if they had not been so they must needs have thought them accounted unclean, and the Apostle would have needed to add some proof that they were not, nor could they account them holy but as admitted to the Church and devoted to God by Baptism. But they knowing this to be the ordinary custom and practice of the Church of God under the guidance of the Apostles, this, when they were made to observe it, and to conclude from it what they might, which is what the Apostle says, that the Unbeliever was sanctified by the Believer, was a good proof that the Believer might lawfully stay and co-habit with the Unbeliever, which is the thing they did not understand, but which the Apostle took this course to teach them and convince them of.

But then, if in the times of the Apostles the Infants of those who were themselves baptized, were also baptized, this might lawfully be done. The Apostles knew their Masters will from his own directions while he liv'd among them; and they were more fully taught it, and led into all Truth by the Spirit poured upon them, that they might be infallible Guides of the Church. If this was done in their time they allow'd it, since we do not find that they have any where reprov'd or condemn'd it; we cannot find any thing said by them from whence we may conclude that it was not, or might not be done. And then 'tis without reason or ground, 'tis against reason, that any do now refuse or neglect this: And if we conform in this practice to the general tenour, and the common Doctrine of Scripture; if we also herein evidently obey the intimations of several particular Texts of the New Testament, and conform also to the practice of the Apostles in their time, which things I think have been fully manifested, we cannot but think our selves safe in doing this, and that we do but our Duty in bringing and admitting the Infants of Baptized Persons to Baptism.

A
Vindication of the CHURCH
IN THE
BAPTIZING
OF
INFANTS.

The THIRD PART.

Being a Proposal of the Answers which
may be given to the chief Objections
against it.

CHAP. I.

*Wherein the Objection against what has been said
concerning the Necessity of Baptism is consider'd
and remov'd.*

THE greatest strength of any Heresie or Error lies in framing Objections and Cavils against the truth. Which 'tis much easier for the corrupt wit of Man to do, than to form and make up an Errour so as it may consist with it self, or but seem

seem to consist with any Truth. And the Cavils and Objections which have been invented against the Baptizing of Infants, are the strongest hold of the Error which is here oppos'd. These have done it the greatest service: by these it has beguil'd some unstable souls, has been able to confound and intangle some ignorant and weak people, and got some followers among those who through incapacity or want of leisure for a little thinking have never well examin'd them, and who without examination have taken up their Principles of Religion as chance, or their conversation and circumstances of Living, or their education offer'd these to them; according to a common carelessness of the world in matters of Religion.

The best and most plausible of these Objections and those which I find to have the greatest regard among the mistaken people I shall here fairly examine and particularly confute. I have already laid the foundations of this, at least, in laying the foundations of the Truth, and the Vindication of this practice of the Church of God: And from what has been said I doubt not, it might be easy to answer any Objections they can bring against it. But these unhappy people I have reason to fear will not see this, nor think their Objections answer'd unless a particular and express answer be laid against them. I shall therefore do this, that I may omit nothing that may be necessary or conducing to convince them & reduce them to the Church: And I shall make it appear in the doing this that their strength is but weakness, and their Objections have no real force; they can deceive only the simple and those that are willing and therefore easy to be deceiv'd, and that their error is really Inconsistent with unquestionable truths of Christian Religion, and that it is inconsistent with, and contradictory to, it self.

I shall in the first place consider the chief Objection on they make against what has been said concerning the Necessity of Baptism, which they frame thus.

If Baptism were the ordinary appointed means of Uniting all Persons to Christ, and so of putting them into a state of Salvation, and there were no other way or means appointed to bring Infants into such a state, then would God have put the Salvation of Infants into the Power of others, even of those who have the disposal of them in their Infancy. For they are not capable themselves of coming to be baptized in their Infancy, and therefore so long as they are in that state they are at the mercy of those who dispose of them as to their everlasting condition, and their Salvation or Damnation is at the will of men; which these people think to be very hard, and unreasonable to believe.

To this Objection we have these things to Answer, which will shew that it has no force in it.

If the Supream and absolute Sovereign over us all has establish'd matters so as that Infants must fare well or ill according as those who have the disposal of them shall deal with them, who shall say this is unjust or unfitting? If he has settled matters thus, it is without doubt just that it should be so.

Again, It is necessary according to the nature of things that their condition in this world be at the mercy of those who have the disposal of them; And they must have the power of Life and Death over them, so as that they can neglect to afford them the means of continuing their natural Life, and they can directly destroy them if they will, and this might be thought unjust with as much reason as the other. It has not pleased God to establish the condition of Infants with respect to this life, any more than that of other mortals, according to an inevitable necessity; nor may we think he has so establish'd their condition with respect to another Life. He has contented himself to make it a Duty of those who have the disposal of Infants to take care of them, till they are able to take care of themselves, and to deal as well with them as they can, to preserve if they can
their

their natural life, and therefore also to secure, as much as in them lies, their eternal Life, and has appointed ordinary means of both, which 'tis their duty if they are able to afford them. And those that dispose of any Infants cannot directly hurt them without hurting themselves; nor neglect using the means of their welfare without incurring the divine displeasure and neglecting their own salvation therein. And this is all that we can understand could be done for them according to the Nature of things: But from hence it follows necessarily, that if Parents will damn themselves by doing that which is forbidden, or by neglect of their Duty to their Infants, they may destroy the natural lives of their Infants, and expose them, at least, to damnation.

Again, we may understand that our Saviour has in *John 3. 3. 5.* made the Sacrament of Baptism to be so necessary in an ordinary way to all persons for their admission into the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, into a Covenant-state, or a State of Salvation, that it must be in the power of those who have the disposal of Infants to bring them into a state of Salvation, or to expose them to a terrible hazard, and danger of missing it; to leave them in such a state as wherein we have no certain or sure ground in Scripture to conclude or expect their Salvation. When a common way and method of Salvation is appointed for all persons, and we do not find any other way appointed for Infants to bring them into a state of Salvation, and the common way is such as the Holy Scripture teaches us they are capable of, though we do not say they cannot in any other way be sav'd, yet we must say we have no sure ground, if we do neglect this, to expect their Salvation, and it must be said this is in an ordinary manner necessary to them, to bring them into a state of Salvation, whatever may be said concerning their neglect to do it who have the disposal of them.

Further, It may be observ'd, to remove this Difficulty

culty and Objection, that if we understand the Christian Constitution thus, that Infants are at the mercy of their Parents whether they shall be in Covenant or not, and in a state of Salvation or no, it is but to understand it of the same nature and state with the Covenant made with Man in his Innocency, and with that constitution of the New Covenant which was establish'd with the Church of God that was made up of the Family of *Abraham*, and this may very justly induce us to understand it in this state. What law was laid in these Constitutions by God upon the Parents as a condition of his favour we shall find upon consideration that it was necessary to their Infants to be kept within the bounds of it as a means, and as the method, of their having right to the Benefits annexed to the Observance of it. We cannot doubt but the Constitution of the first Covenant which God made with *Adam* was such, that as it oblig'd him to abstain from the forbidden fruit, as a condition of his Happiness, it did oblige his Infants too as a means of theirs. So that if any of them had been born in Paradise, yet they might not have eaten of that fruit; But if *Adam* had given the fruit of it to them they had lost all right to the Tree of Life, and the necessary means and condition of their continuing happy, and in favour with God, had been wanting to them. In like manner the Law of Circumcision did oblige both Parents and Infants. As it was a Law to *Abraham* and the grown Persons in his Family, it was a necessary condition to their Male-Infants of their entering into the Number of God's people, or into a state of Favour and Salvation. And this appears plainly at the first establishment of this Ceremony or Sacrament in *Gen. 17*; and is most fully signified by what is said verse 14. *The uncircumcised Man-child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that Soul shall be cut off from his people.* And then the Happiness or Salvation of Infants did depend as much upon

upon their Parents disposal of them as this Doctrine can be suppos'd to make it to do under the Christian Constitution. Indeed in an ordinary way it must be thus according to the Nature of things. And if we plainly see that matters have been thus order'd by God, and that we cannot conceive how they could be otherwise, we may justly believe they are so order'd now.

Further ; It is evident by several matters of fact that the Condition of Infants is establish'd to depend upon the Parents conduct and disposal of themselves, and thus it has been from the first. It is by *Adam's* breach of Covenant with God, and his falling himself into a State of Rebellion and Misery, that his Posterity come into the World in a State of Rebellion and Misery. Most certainly if any of the natural seed of *Abraham* was not circumcised in his Infancy by the neglect of his Parents, or any other hinderance, and he did neglect it afterwards, his male-Infants had no right from him to be circumcised, but must have been look'd upon as of the same rank with the Children of the Heathen. And 'tis without question that those who would remain Heathens during the times of the Jewish Church, who would live in defiance of the true Religion, they could not derive to their Children any right to this Sacrament, nor could they upon their account be admitted into Covenant with God. Such Children were in the account of God unclean. If the Parents were not in Covenant the Children could not be born in Covenant, nor as theirs could they be brought into Covenant ; And if thus the condition of the Infants does depend upon and follow the Parents government of themselves, it is as much at the mercy of their Parents as we do suppose it to be in saying it depends upon the Parents disposal of them.

Further ; It is well known to have been the common Opinion of the Primitive Church, that Baptism was

was necessary to Infants to bring them into a state of Grace or Favour with God, and Salvation; and that they founded this Opinion on the words of our Saviour in *Job. 3. 3. 5.* Which Scripture, we have shown already, we have good reason to believe they did not ill or misunderstand, as some presumptuous Men of these late times have made bold to say. And 'tis known the Church of God condemn'd the *Pelagians* as advancers of a new Heresie for saying that Infants might be sav'd without Baptism: Who had not the confidence to tell the Church that they misunderstood this Scripture in making use of it to establish the common necessity of Baptism even so far as to extend it to Infants; for they themselves were forced to acknowledge from hence that Baptism was necessary to Infants to their entring into the Kingdom of God. And if this opinion of the Ancients be understood, as asserting the *ordinary* necessity of Baptism to Infants, it is without doubt what we may follow and what is justified by this Scripture, because 'tis deliver'd and taught in it. And that this opinion of theirs may be thus understood and interpreted a learned man of our Church gives us good ground and reason to say: I mean Dr. *Sam. Ward*, who speaks of it thus. "It is not credible that the Ancient Church would think God would deal more severely with Infants, who are involv'd in the guilt, than they lie under by another, than with adult persons who had been defil'd with actual and personal sin of their own: But it was not doubted but grown-up persons might be accepted with God, and be sav'd though they did happen to die unbaptized, when they had a design and desire to be baptized but were providentially hindred from it, and surprized by Death before they could have it. And for that reason we may believe the Primitive Church did not intend by their opinion of the common necessity of Baptism to determine against the possibility

the salvation of all the Infants of Baptized Parents who were by any providential hindrance detained from Baptism, and who died before they could have And he represents it as the common opinion of our Divines, That the design of Baptism on the part of the Parents, where it could not be actually had for reason of the Intervention of some providential inevitable hindrance, might by the mercy of God be accepted in favour of their Infants who is said to accept in some cases of the will for the deed. But yet God's bearing with the omission in such a case, and saving the Infant in an extraordinary way we may not think does take off the ordinary Necessity of Baptism: But still it is the means appointed by God to bring Infants into a State of Salvation, and is the way which alone we are allow'd to depend upon and to expect their Salvation by. And if this Opinion does not determine against the possibility of the Salvation of all Infants who die unbaptized, it does not make their Salvation entirely to lie at the mercy of those who have the disposal of them, and then this Objection is of no force against it.

Lastly; It may be said, That if the Infants of Baptized Parents have by God's order a right to the Sacrament of Baptism, this Doctrine of the common and ordinary necessity of it does not put the Salvation of those Infants to be entirely at the mercy of their Parents without all hope of their Salvation if they die unbaptized. If the Child has a right to Baptism it has a right to be admitted into Covenant with God, and a state of Salvation; And then though by the Parents neglect or mistake, or though by some providential hindrance it is not baptized, there is some ground of hope concerning its Salvation, and they who believe the Infants of baptized Parents have such a right may entertain some hopes of this. It may be hoped that God, who allows an Infant a right to be admitted into Covenant with him, who allows it the Sacrament of admission, will take

take it into such a state, tho' by the dispensation of his Providence 'tis hindred from having the Sacrament of admission administred to it. Those whom he allows to be admitted into the Kingdom of God by a Sacrament, we may hope he himself will take into that Kingdom without the Sacrament when it cannot be had. But on the other side, if he does not allow them to be admitted into the Kingdom of God by the common Sacrament of Admission, we can have no hope, because we have no ground from his word for it, that they shall be admitted without the Sacrament. They who will believe that no Infants have any right to the Sacrament have no ground to hope for or expect their Salvation if they die without Baptism, or if they have it: Not if they die without Baptism, because that is the common appointed way; and there is no other declar'd or appointed for their coming into a state of Salvation: Nor if they have it, because if they have no right to it by divine appointment, it can do them no good: 'Tis certain these people have no express Scripture that can give them any assurance or ground of hope while they will believe no Infants have any right to this Sacrament. And if they will believe and expect the Salvation of such Infants without express Scripture they condemn themselves in their insisting upon express Scripture for every thing that we may believe or do in Religion. And we have express Scripture on our side while we urge the general and common necessity of Baptism to all, and so to Infants, but they have none while they deny the Lawfulness of Infant-Baptism, or that any Infants have right to this Sacrament, and yet will believe the Salvation of Infants that die without Baptism. I know they think they have express Scripture to justify their belief and expectation of this, and that these words of our Saviour in *Mark 10. Of such is the Kingdom of God*, will serve the turn. But any one that can read may see it is not there said of such is the Kingdom of God with-

out Baptism ; these words are not there, therefore this is not an exprefs Scripture for this belief. As they interpret this Scripture they make it contradict our Saviour's words in *Joh. 3. 3. 5.* Where he says, *Except one be born again of Water and of the Holy Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* By this Text Infants are not of the Kingdom of God unless they be born of Water and of the Spirit. And then as that in *St. Mark* does not exprefsly say they are of the Kingdom of God without Baptism, so neither does it mean this, nor may it be concluded from thence by Consequence, because we must not gather a Doctrine from any Scripture by Consequence which contradicts any other Scripture. And to interpret these Scriptures so as they may agree, we must say, that when our Saviour says of Infants, *Of such is the Kingdom of God*, he means such may be admitted into the Kingdom of God by the Sacrament appointed for such admission ; they may enter into the Kingdom of God by being born again of Water and of the Spirit as well as others, they are not excluded from the Sacrament of Admission the common means appointed for all. And thus that Text in *St. Mark* really helps us as it proves fully that Infants may have a right to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, and so to the Sacrament of admission, and gives us hope accordingly that such may be sav'd though they are hindred from Baptism. But 'tis also serviceable to condemn these people who deny all Infants a right to Baptism, and by consequence a right to admission into the Kingdom of Heaven, directly contrary to the true intent and meaning of this Scripture.

C H A P. II.

Wherein is answer'd the Objection against the Regeneration of Infants in Baptism.

I shall in the next place consider what the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism have to say against the Efficacy of Baptism, which we assert from the Holy Scriptures, in the Administration of the New Birth, or as the appointed instrument and means of our Regeneration

They think they have a good Argument against the Regeneration and new birth of Infants in their Baptism, so that many who were baptized in their Infancy do afterwards when they grow up lead very wicked lives, and some of them in all appearance dye in their wickedness. Hence they conclude that the Baptism of Infants is of no use or effect, and is therefore disown'd herein by Almighty God, and appears to be no Institution of his but a meer humane invention, and an instance of Will-worship. Infants it appears thus are not born again in Baptism, they are not born of Water and Spirit, and then our Saviour's rule concerning this regards only grown persons. In that Infants do thus appear not to be born again in Baptism. this proves, they think, that they cannot be born again in, or by, that Sacrament, and therefore ought not to be baptized. They urge, too, that this Doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, since many that are baptized in their Infancy dye in Impenitency and Wickedness, does contradict the Doctrine of the Church concerning the certain final Perseverance of the Saints. This is the Objection in the whole force and extent of it; which I shall prove is a very weak one, and does not conclude against Infant-Baptism or the Regeneration which is rightly and according to Scripture

Scripture said to be conferr'd in this Sacrament: To do this fully I shall dispose the Answer to the Objection under the following particulars.

1. If the wicked Lives of those that have been baptized were an Argument that Infants ought not to be baptized, then this would be an Argument against their baptizing of grown Persons: For certainly many of them after they have been dipp'd among them do not lead very good lives. If they should pretend that all such are Saints and truly good people the rest of the world know and find the contrary. Besides some of their Party being convinced of their Errour do forsake them, and return to the Church, perhaps, after they have been re-baptized: But I doubt they will hardly think such persons to persevere in goodness. I doubt they will freely, as is usual with the Sects to do, bestow upon them the hard names of Back-sliders and Apostates, or Time servers: They will conclude they were Hypocrites while they were among them, and went out from them because they were not of them, and they are unstable because double minded, the seed sown in them for want of taking root does wither, and in time of Temptation they fall away. These are the common censures of those who justly forsake them, though they are very godly, and gracious, and precious people while they are among them. And then they must own that their Baptism does not prove it self the Lawful one by its good and happy effects, or by the consequents of it in the Lives of those that receiv'd it any better than ours. And the ill lives of those that are baptized in their Infancy is not an Argument against the Lawfulness and allowance of their Baptism, or an evidence that the Spirit of God does not work with it.

2. The Regeneration or New-Birth which is administered in and with the Sacrament of Baptism lies chiefly in this, that the Baptized are therein according to divine institution and appointment translated from

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the old *Adam* to the New one, taken off from *Adam* and united, or as the Scripture gives us leave to speak ingrafted into Christ. We are all by one Spirit baptized into one Body, and being baptized into Christ, or by Baptism united to him, we put on Christ, which brings the Person baptized to a Communion with him in what he is and can communicate as our Mediator and Saviour. It brings us to a Communion with him in his Death as a Sacrifice and Propitiation for sin, and so gives right to remission of sins, and removes the guilt of Original sin: hence is that Benefit said to be conferr'd in Baptism. It gives a right to partake in the Spirit of Christ, brings men to a communion with him in his Holiness, as some speak; hence 'tis said that Christ cleanses his Church by the washing in this Sacrament, and the Sanctification of our Nature is said to be conferr'd in and with Baptism. It also gives Communion with him in the merits of his perfect Righteousness, and Obedience to the Law of God, and so confers a right to Everlasting happiness in the enjoyment of God which that perfect righteousness or obedience is the Condition of. As the Person baptized is therein engag'd and devoted to serve and honour God, and to be his, so God does also become a God to him according to the phrase used in the Covenant when it was administered to the Family of *Abraham*. The baptized person has a right to all that is necessary to his final Salvation, and to the perfection of that. This rite and ceremony enters us into Covenant with God; and so the Baptized person comes by it to have a Covenant right to his Salvation, and all that is necessary to it, that is, he obtains a conditional right to the favours of the Covenant: He obtains a right which attends and depends upon his own engagement to Almighty God. A Covenant between two parties implies mutual engagement; and it must be observ'd that what is promis'd on God's part depends, according to the

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state of the Covenant, and the appointed method of Salvation, upon performance of what he requires, and what is engag'd on our part as we become capable to perform it. If therefore after we are Baptized, we live to be capable of performing our part, and neglect it, we forfeit and lose the Benefits promised on God's part of the Covenant, we break the Covenant which we entered into in our Baptism, and then we cannot enjoy the Benefits of it. As we have then in our Baptism but a Covenant or conditional right to the sanctifying gift of the Holy Ghost, we must diligently use the means of Grace to enjoy his Operations in us, we must *hunger and thirst after righteousness* that we may be filled, must pray for the Spirit of God, for 'tis promised *He will give the Spirit to them that ask him*; we must watch for his motions and cherish and obey them; and all this is but the fulfilling of our engagement, and if we do not this we must needs forfeit and want the Sanctifying gift of the Holy Spirit.

3. Certainly it must not be said that the Holy Spirit cannot operate in the Souls of Infants; this were to limit the Infinite Power of the Spirit of God: And to say this were to contradict the certain Sanctification of Jesus the Christ from the Womb, who was an holy thing in his very Conception and first Formation, and was born such. Children are capable of receiving the Grace of God as well as grown persons; and we have reason to believe they may by Baptism receive as it were the Seeds of Holiness, as by the Infusion of their rational Souls they receive the Seeds of Reason, though they cannot till afterwards discover the fruits of either, or show that they have these by the exercises of them. That Infants are capable of Spiritual Blessings is undeniably prov'd by that Evangelical History which we made use of before, which we have in *Mark* 10. from the 13th to 16th verse. Some good people, we see there, brought

their Infants to our Saviour for some Spiritual benefits to be conferr'd upon them by laying his hands on them and praying over them. He did lay his hands on them and pray, and we cannot think he mockt or deceiv'd these good people in so doing, especially when he manifestly approv'd them in bringing their Children to him: And then it was not to no purpose or effect that he did what appear'd: In laying his hands upon them and praying over them he did not make a vain and empty show of doing what he did not inwardly and spiritually perform, he really did therein and thereby conferr some Spiritual benefits upon them; And then Infants are capable of such blessings, they are capable of receiving the inward Spiritual Operations, and the Sanctifying Gift of the Holy Ghost: And it is not vain or without warrant, that the Church prays at the Baptizing of an Infant that God would be pleased to give his Holy Spirit to that Infant, we have the warrant of our Saviour's practice here in doing so, besides that of his command that Infants should be brought to him for such blessings. And it is observable to our purpose in this Instance, that the Inward and Spiritual Gifts may be conferr'd to Infants by and with an outward and visible sign, as a means whereby they receive the same and a pledge to assure them: For after this manner our Saviour conferr'd the Gifts of the Holy Ghost on these Infants: He laid his hands on them and Blessed them; and if the Spirit of God can work upon the Soul of an Infant he can do this in and with the Sacrament of Baptism.

4. Since many Scriptures ascribe to Baptism to be a means of grace, we may learn from thence that the Spirit of God does ordinarily work in and with the administration of this Sacrament. That the grace of God, according to his determin'd and establish'd method of bringing men into a state of Salvation, is conferr'd ordinarily in and with it, must be concluded

cluded from such Scriptures as say Baptism saves us, and Christ saves us by the washing of Regeneration, and he cleanses his Church by washing it. The Sacraments (says an excellent Divine) are upon two accounts the means of God's conferring or our partaking of his grace, and signs of some present grace which is conferr'd and communicated with them.

(1.) Because the receiving of them is made part of the condition requir'd of us that we may be partakers of his Grace according to that Scripture, *He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.* (2.) Because a certain divine power attends the Sacramental Signs, according to the mercy which instituted them; which from a sure Covenant or Promise bestows the saving grace of God to the receiver of them, and works in the Soul of such an one. Thus speaks the judicious *Le Blanc*. Upon this ground has our Church, according to the Scriptures and the sense of the Primitive Church, taught, that the inward and spiritual grace of Baptism is a Death unto Sin and a new Birth unto Righteousness. And an Eminent Father of our Church accordingly speaks thus to the same purpose; In Baptism are the beginnings of a new Life; the Spirit of Life takes hold of us, and as far as is agreeable to our age and condition we are renew'd by the Holy Ghost; for Baptism being a Beginning of our Performance of our Duty, God does likewise in it begin proportionably to make good his promise. (*Sy. Patrick Bishop of Ely, in Aqua Genitalis.*) And this was evidently the Doctrine of the Primitive Church which we find speaking of Baptism under the Name of Sanctification, and that, too, when 'tis apply'd to Infants.

5. Yet it must be said, That they are Sanctified in their Infancy, in and with their Baptism, but according to the Imperfect state of their Nature. Their faculties are not ripe, nor capable of their perfect and proper acts; and by consequence 'tis not to be said,

nor do we say, that they have the compleat habits of grace wrought in them in their Infancy. They are doubtless so Sanctified as to be accepted with God in that state ; so as if they die they shall see God, though without Holiness no man can see God ; and yet they have not the perfect habits of vertue and holiness because their faculties are not capable of them ; so far as they are in nature capable they may be Sanctified, and that is enough for their Infant State. And when we consider that the renewing of the Holy Ghost is not a work done all at once even in grown persons that are baptized, we may much rather allow this in ordinary Infants, and believe they are not all at once in the moment of Baptism perfectly and compleatly endow'd with habits of grace and vertue ; Though it must be said perhaps that Jesus our Saviour was so, unless that expression concerning him may be understood to mean otherwise, that he grew in Wisdom in his Child hood. As this is a work then which proceeds by Degrees, and depends for its progress upon the ripening of our faculties, so it likewise depends upon the use of proper means of grace as our faculties do ripen. The word of God is the ordinary means of Grace to adult Persons, by which the Holy Ghost Sanctifies us as we become capable to understand and use it ; but then to carry on the good beginnings received in Baptism we must diligently hear and use the word of God. It is for this reason that our Church directs the God-fathers and God-mothers who eng ge to concern themselves about the religious education of the Child they answer for, that they do take care to admonish him to hear Sermons, and learn the Principles of Religion, as they are taught in our Catechism. These good beginnings then of Grace and Sanctification conferr'd in Baptism may be lost, and they may be improv'd. As the faculties ripen they may be so employ'd and exercised as that a person may grow habitually addicted to a worldly, sensual, and vicious Life ; Or else
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with care of a Childs Education he may be accustomed to the fear of God, and the Rules of Vertue, and the Habits of these may grow up with him, as it appears they do in some persons who were baptized in their Infancy, and are wisely and religiously educated.

6. We need not fear to say that the Sanctification receiv'd in Baptism may be lost, since the Holy Scripture gives us leave to do so. Our Saviour himself expressly tells us that there may be Persons united to him who shall be separated again and fall into Perdition. He teaches this by a Metaphor, wherein he speaks of himself as a Vine, and of those united to him as the Brances in *John 15. 1, 2.* He says, *I am the true Vine, my Father is the Husbandman; Every Branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away;* which supposes there may be branches in him that do not bear fruit and that are taken away, and separated from him. There may be persons united to Christ, baptized into Christ, as the Scripture speaks, who not taking care to live according to their Honourable State and Engagement in being so, shall be separated again and so never shall be sav'd by him. And then all that which they gain'd by that uniting may be lost by that separation; and though they did receive some influence and operation of the Holy Spirit by vertue of that Union they lose that also. Again, to this purpose the Apostle speaks of some who were sanctified, and yet after this *did despise unto the Spirit of Grace, Heb. 10. 9.* *He that despised Moses's Law, says he, died without mercy: Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace.* He supposes this might be, without doubt, because there were some Instances of it. There were some who after they had receiv'd the Christian Baptism return'd to their former wicked way of living. And they instead of cherishing, and so improving, the good influences of the H. Spirit,

are said to have done despite to the Spirit of Grace: they neglected his motions first, and then came to despise and resist them. They did not constantly set themselves to those good things which he mov'd them to, and then after a while they resisted him, and acted contrary to his good motions, and so return'd to their former wickedness. Again; The same thing is intimated by our Saviour in his Parable concerning several talents given to several persons to be used and improv'd by them, *Mat. 25.* In the end of which at verse 29. of the Chapter, he says, *Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.* This is as much as to say, we may improve the gifts of God and we may lose them; and if we use them well as we are able and as they are design'd to be used, we shall gain an increase of them, and if we do not use them well but neglect them they shall be taken away.

It is not necessary that he who is once in a state of Salvation must be always in a state of Salvation and certainly and infallibly attain eternal Life. It has pleas'd Almighty God to establish a wise and just method of our attaining Salvation, a method agreeing to the Nature of things, and such as in the main parts of it shall not, ordinarily to be sure, be dispens'd with. In this particular it seems indispensable, that every one who shall be sav'd, even by Jesus Christ, shall come under an engagement to serve and honour God, shall be devoted to this according to the rules of Religion reveal'd and brought to him. When the state of the case is thus, he who is under this engagement comes into a state of Salvation, he who neglects or breaks himself off from this engagement neglects or falls from a state of Salvation. And though God's gracious Election of a man, which is the only ground and sure cause of his final perseverance in a state of Salvation will secure him that he shall

shall finally be in that state, yet an elected person may for a time be out of such a state. How many are so? who for a time are abandon'd to wickedness and afterwards betink themselves and turn to God and their Duty. Certainly *Saul* while he was a Persecutor must be reckon'd to have been out of a state of Salvation, for he was in a state of defiance and contempt of the Saviour himself. And without doubt *David* under his guilt of Adultery and Murder, and *Peter* under that of denying his Master, and abjuring his acknowledgment of him were both in such a state as if they had died in it they must have perish'd for ever. And these men were secur'd against this only by that divine election which did not suffer them to die in that condition, but restor'd them to their devoted state again, and brought them to a final perseverance in it. Infants therefore may be in such a state as would bring them to Everlasting Salvation, by Baptism, and yet may lose it if they live to years of discretion, and neglect their Baptismal engagement; though if those baptized Infants should have died in their Infancy before they had done so, they should be sav'd. It may be said then to this matter, that whatever is true, and according to the Holy Scripture in the Doctrine of Perseverance, it is not contradicted by this Doctrine of the Regeneration of Infants in Baptism, though some of them do afterwards fall away from Grace and Salvation. Since it must be acknowledg'd that even grown persons after they are unquestionably born again of the Spirit, as were *David* and *Peter*, may fall into such a state as wherein if they had died they had perisht everlastingly, it cannot be hard or untrue to say that Infants having had their Imperfect measure of Sanctification in Baptism may lose it again, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace, and come to account the Blood of Christ with which they were Sanctified as an unholy thing.

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From what has been said I think it does appear that Infants may, and we have good reason to believe, do receive in Baptism some measures of Sanctification from the Spirit of God, to whom they are devoted and given up therein, though they lose them as they grow up and come to lead wicked lives. And then their living thus when they are grown up does not prove that they were not Sanctified according as their Infant-state was capable in their Baptism, and so this is no Argument against their Baptism.

C H A P. III.

Wherein the Objection from certain Qualifications requir'd in order to Baptism is propos'd and answered.

THE Adversaries of Infant Baptism, to make good their Errour, tell People that our Lord has requir'd of all that shall be baptized such Qualifications in order to their Baptism, and as the condition of their being baptized, as Infants, are not capable of, and for that reason Infants ought not to be baptized. They say he has requir'd Faith and Repentance in order to this. That the Qualification of Repentance is requir'd they build chiefly upon that Text in *Acts* 2.38, 39: which I have before urg'd as a just and evident vindication of Infants Baptism, and so I have in discoursing on it already remov'd this part of the Objection.

At present then, I shall confine the Discourse to the Qualification of Faith: To consider what they have to say concerning the Necessity of this in order to Baptism, and to show the mistakes which they do herein fall under. They argue for the necessity of Faith

Faith as a Qualification requir'd to be in all that may be baptized before their taking of Baptism from these Texts and in this manner following. It is said concerning *Philip* the Evangelist, and the Eunuch to whom he had been preaching the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Acts* 8. 36, 37: that *as they went on their way they came to a certain Water, and the Eunuch said, see here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip answer'd, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayst.* We see here that St. *Philip* requir'd of this Man a profession of his Faith before he would Baptize him, he makes it the condition of his Baptizing him, and intimates he would not do it unless he believ'd, in that he says, *If thou believest thou mayst be baptized.* And he intimates moreover, that as a profession of Faith must be requir'd by those who administer Baptism of the Party to be baptized, so that profession must be of what is real and sincere, that the person may have a true right to Baptism, and any real benefit and advantage from it, or from Christ in it; therefore he says to him, *If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayst be baptized.* From hence they conclude and gather by consequence that Faith is requir'd of all persons as the condition and qualification necessary that they may be baptized; and that none may be baptized but those who believe, or at least do make show and profession of doing so, and such as that the Church may reasonably think they are real and sincere in that profession. They will conclude from hence that none but Believers may be baptized, and therefore Infants may not be Baptized because they are not Believers.

To enforce this Argument they urge further the Text in *Mark* 16. 16: Where, after our Saviour had given his Apostles Commission to disperse themselves in the world, and preach the Gospel to all Nations, he says, *He that believes and is baptized shall be sav'd, but he that believes not shall be damn'd.* From hence
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they thus argue, Is not believing set before baptizing? He does not say, He that is baptized and believeth, but he that believeth and is baptized shall be sav'd; from whence they Inferred that believing must go before baptizing, and none must be baptized but those who first believe.

They further think they strengthen this Argument against us of the Church of England by urging what is said concerning this matter in our Churches Catechism. Where, to the Question, *What is requir'd of Persons to be baptized?* The Answer is, *Repentance whereby they forsake sin, and faith whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.* From whence they say, That forasmuch as Infants cannot have either Faith or Repentance, which are requir'd by the Lord of all persons to be baptized, it must needs be concluded that Infants are no meet Subjects of Baptism, and so by consequence it must needs follow that Baptism of Infants is none of the Lord's Baptism. And thus they think they set the Doctrine and Practice of the Church one against the other, and pretend that this Doctrine condemns the practice of baptizing Infants.

In answer to this Objection I shall altogether let alone what is usually said and may be said concerning the Faith which may be in Infants, and proceed upon the supposition of the Adversaries themselves that Infants have not actual Faith: And shall, I doubt not, make it evident, for all this, that they are greatly mistaken in thus arguing against their Baptism, and that they do grossly misunderstand, and abuse these Scriptures in urging them against it. I shall dispose the Answer to these arguings under the following particulars.

I. We acknowledge that Faith in *Jesus Christ* is now the condition of obtaining Salvation by him. That gracious Covenant which is the common appointed method of coming to our everlasting happiness by

by *Jesus Christ* requires as the condition to be perform'd on our part a faithfull Obedience; a lively and effectual Faith, such as works by Love, and sets a man upon a new and Evangelical Obedience, suitable to the Laws of *Jesus Christ*.

2. When we comply with the method of Salvation propos'd to us in the Gospel, or, in other words, enter into that Covenant with God which is now established as the method of Salvation, we do engage and bind our selves and take it upon us to entertain and live by such a Faith. We enter and are admitted into Covenant with God, which is the Kingdom of Heaven, and a state of Salvation, upon an engagement or promise to perform what he requires, we perform the Condition of the Covenant when we actually believe and live according to that Faith. The engaging and promising to entertain and be govern'd by such a Faith is enough to enter us into Covenant. A very obvious and easie distinction would avoid all the confusion of thought and the mistake which these people and some others run into in this matter: They should distinguish between the Conditions of the Covenant which is the method of Salvation, and the Condition of entering into that Covenant. Baptism as it is an Engagement to serve and honour God, or the answer of a good Conscience towards God, as *St. Peter* speaks, is the Condition or Means of entering into Covenant with God, and Faith and Obedience are the Conditions to be perform'd on Man's part when he becomes capable to perform them. And we need only to be engaged to perform these to enter us into Covenant. The Engagement gives us a Conditional Covenant-right to the favours of the Covenant; the Engagement, I say, to perform the Conditions of the Covenant. To enter into Covenant is to come under Engagement or Vow and Promise to do those things which are the requisite Conditions of God's favour by Christ, and this is what

what Infants may do, and therefore they may be baptized, which is the appointed solemn Rite of taking that Engagement upon us. We enter into Covenant, then, by a promise of Faith, we perform our part of the Covenant when we actually do believe.

3. The Sacrament of Baptism enters us into Covenant with God, as we do therein come under an engagement to believe and obey him according to the Rules of the Gospel. That we do in taking this come under such an Engagement, and therein enter into a Covenant-state, and come to have right to the Mercies promised on God's part of the Covenant, has been sufficiently proved already, and therefore I shall not need to insist upon it now. I shall then only add to this particular what is necessary to justify our Church which by this Objection is made inconsistent with it self.

Our Church teaches that in taking of Baptism we engage to a faithful Obedience: In that it requires a profession or promise of this to be made by the person baptized or by some other Christians in his Name, that he will *believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, and keep God's Holy will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his Life.* This engagement is necessary to our entering into Covenant with God, and therefore must be and is taken upon us, when we take the Sacrament of Baptism. It is a devoting our selves to God to live to him according to his direction, and engagement to expect his favour in that way. When therefore our Church says, Faith and Repentance are requir'd of them that are to be baptized, it means, that the promise and engagement of these is necessary to all, and therefore orders and says that Infants promise them both by their Sureties. In grown persons that come to be baptized there must be actual Faith and Repentance in some measure, because indeed they cannot sincerely promise and engage themselves to these, unless they are
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actually in some measure possess'd of them. But if they have these before Baptism they are not properly in Covenant hereby, nor do enjoy a Covenant-right in the ordinary appointed way to the favour of God, and Salvation by Christ, till they come under an engagement and vow to entertain and govern themselves by an obedient Faith. As for Infants it appears the Church judges the engagement and promise to be enough to them in their Infant-state, as it is all that they are capable of. And this appears by the next Question and Answer in the Catechism. It is ask'd, since Faith and Repentance are required of persons to be baptized, *Why then are Infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?* The Answer to which says, *Because they promise them both by their Sureties, which promise when they come to age themselves are bound to perform* It must be observed, then, that although the Church here says Faith and Repentance are required of persons to be baptized, yet it does not say they are required of *all* that shall be baptized. It teaches that it suffices to the baptism of Infants that they promise and engage to these things by their Sureties, who make their engagements in their Name, and bind them thereby. It teaches that Faith and Repentance are required of Persons to be baptized, but shews that it means these are required not of all but of those who are capable of them. They are required to be engaged and promised by all, and therefore Infants promise them both by their Sureties, but they are not required to be actually in all; and that Infants cannot while such perform them, but they however do promise them, and thereupon may be baptized. Now having made appear that the Doctrine of our Church is consistent with it self, while it says Faith and Repentance are requir'd of Persons to be baptized, and yet that Infants may be baptized, I shall proceed to shew that it well agrees with Holy Scripture too.

4. Infants may be bound and engag'd to perform the Conditions of the Covenant with God in taking a Sacrament which is the appointed Rite and Ceremony of such an engagement, and are herein accepted with God, and receiv'd into Covenant and a state of favour with him only upon this while they are not capable of more than this. They may be engag'd in a Covenant with God before they are capable to understand what they bind themselves to perform, or what they may expect from God upon the performance of it. This cannot be deny'd when we see God himself ordering them to be brought into Covenant with him. The Male Infants in *Abraham's* family were order'd to be brought into Covenant with God. And we find it said of the Nation of *Israel*, that their little ones entered into Covenant with God, *Dent. 29. 11*. This then cannot be denied, that Infants may be bound and engag'd to perform, when they shall be able, the terms of a Covenant with God: And he will accept of this from them and reckon them in Covenant with Himself, and to have a Covenant-right to his favour thereupon. God himself promises in *Gen. 17.* all the favours on his part to the Infants who are thus engaged in Covenant with him; *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed after thee*, says he to *Abraham*, verse 7th. which shows sufficiently his acceptance of this engagement from them.

To make this answer compleat I will observe, that the Condition requir'd on Man's part of this Covenant with *Abraham*, and by consequence what was engag'd by the Infants admitted to it, was a faithful Obedience. This is evidently shown in what God says to *Abraham* at his first instituting of Circumcision to be from thenceforth the Sacrament and Rite for entering of Males into Covenant with him, in *Gen. 17. 1*; *Walk before me* (says he) *and be thou perfect*. Which is as much as to say, Give thy self up

to my conduct, and rely upon me to make it succeed well to thee. And this is said to him, and propos'd as a Condition of the Covenant which God was about to propose, as we must needs see by the connexion of this verse with the 2d, for he adds immediately, *And I will make my Covenant between me and thee*; Which is as much as to say, upon this condition, or if thou wilt do thus, I will be in Covenant with thee and thy seed after thee, and engage myself by faithful promise to be a God to thee, and thy seed: It does establish this to be the condition of the Covenant both to him and his seed. This appears further in what the Apostle says, *Rom. 4. 11.* where speaking of *Abraham* he says, *he receiv'd the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith.* This place of Scripture tells us that Circumcision when it was instituted to be a solemn engagement into Covenant with God it became a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith; a seal and assurance of Righteousness, that is, to them that did believe in God. Then it was to be a seal of Righteousness, or an assurance of Justification and Remission, but to them that did believe; and then Believing or Faith was the condition requir'd by God in that Covenant made in Circumcision. Yet we may observe Infants were entred into this Covenant by Circumcision who were no more capable of actual Faith and Obedience than Infants are now. But they were engag'd to this, for the Apostle says plainly the taking of Circumcision made every one that took it a *Debtor to do the whole Law*, and God accepted of this from them it appears, and condescended to account it enough to admit them into Covenant with him, for he himself expressly order'd that Infants should by Circumcision be entred into Covenant with him.

Thus I think it is undeniably evident from Scripture, that God in his favour and condescension to the case of our Infants, allows and has establish'd that

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they may be taken into that Covenant with him which is propos'd to Mankind as the way of Salvation, and therein may be in a state of Salvation: And that their engagement to perform the Conditions of the Covenant in that solemn way and manner which is appointed for the taking of that engagement upon us is accepted with him, and does suffice for them in their Infant state. If then they may be engag'd by a Sacrament to perform the conditions of the Covenant and may thereby come to have a Covenant-right to the promised mercies on God's part, they may most undoubtedly be baptized.

5. We will desire these people to observe, that this Text, (*Acts* 8. 36, 37.) does not require actual Faith or the profession of it in all that shall be admitted to Baptism. To interpret this Text thus were to make it contradict what has been produc'd before from Holy Scripture; And that must be a false Interpretation of any Scripture which contradicts any undoubted Doctrines or other Texts of Scripture. The Evangelist says to the Eunuch only thus, *If Thou believest with all thine heart thou mayst be baptized;* And these words cannot extend any further than to him, and such as he, that is, to grown Persons. And he does not add, *For all that may be baptized must believe.* The adding of this would have made it a general rule, but this could not be added, because it would have contradicted the Scripture in other places. It would have contradicted the establish'd method of Salvation, and the condescension which there is in the state of it to the Condition of Infants. It does not follow at all from the Evangelists saying to the Eunuch that *He* must believe to be baptized, that therefore *all* must believe to be baptized. If Infants may be engag'd in Covenant with God, they may be engag'd to perform Faith and Obedience, when they shall be capable of this: And then actual Faith and Obedience are not requir'd of them in order to be in Covenant

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with God, therefore these are not requir'd of them in order to Baptism, which is an entring into Covenant with God, and then actual Faith and Obedience are not requir'd of all in order to Baptism.

6. Lastly ; It is as weakly and unjustly that they argue for the necessity of Faith to goe before Baptism from *Mark. 16. 16.* They say, believing is there set before baptizing, and therefore believing must goe before baptizing, and none must be baptized but those who first believe. That they mistake and wrest these words would plainly appear if they would consider, that As our Saviour here sets believing before being baptized, so he sets Baptism before being sav'd. And then if none must be baptized but he that believes, because believing is here set before Baptism, none also must be sav'd, according to their Interpretation of this Scripture, but those who are baptized, because he sets Baptism before Salvation. Further, it may be observ'd our Saviour here sets both these before Salvation as requir'd in order to it ; *He that believes and is baptized shall be sav'd*, he says, but he does not set Believing before Baptism as that which is requir'd in order to it : He does not say, *He that believes shall be baptized*, as he says, *He that believes and is baptized shall be sav'd*. And if we consider this we shall see that it is so far from being a Text against Infant-Baptism, that 'tis very concluding for it, as I shall make thus appear. Infants must be admitted to all that which is necessary to their Salvation ; but Baptism by this Scripture is necessary to all persons to Salvation ; therefore Infants must be admitted to Baptism. This Sacrament is necessary to their Salvation, because 'tis here set before it and requir'd in order to it, which the Text proves much more strongly than that Faith is necessary to Baptism, because though Faith be set before Baptism here, yet 'tis not requir'd in order to Baptism.

In this Scripture, both Faith and Baptism are requir'd

quir'd in order to Salvation ; from whence, and from other Scriptures we must conclude both are ordinarily necessary. In some places Faith is requir'd as necessary, and spoken of as sufficient without any mention of Baptism. In other places Baptism is spoken of alone as that which puts men into a state of Salvation without any mention of Faith. And from these things we may conclude that Faith may be sufficient to Salvation where that is, and Baptism is desir'd and design'd if possible but it cannot be had ; and Baptism may suffice to put us into a state of Salvation where Faith cannot be had which is the Case of Infants. But where neither Faith nor Baptism can be had that Soul must be in a very doubtful case from this and all the rest of Holy Scripture, and cannot be sav'd in the appointed method and way of Salvation if at all.

We say those Scriptures which require actual Faith and Repentance either in order to Baptism or Salvation do not concern all Persons, therefore not Infants. If they do concern all Persons then Infants cannot be sav'd : If they do not concern all Persons then Infants notwithstanding them may be baptized. These things are requir'd to Baptism and to Salvation of those who are capable of them. And as we believe Infants may be sav'd by the merits of Christ, but do find the Scripture plainly making Faith, Repentance, and Baptism the means and conditions of partaking of the merits of Christ and Salvation by him ; therefore we say according to the Scripture, that Infants who are not capable of Faith or Repentance, as we now suppose, may and ought to be baptized, because they may and ought to have the means of Salvation afforded them which they are capable of using, and being Benefited by, and such is Baptism.

The true design of this Scripture is plainly this, to signifie and teach that both Faith and Baptism are requir'd

requir'd of all persons in order to their Salvation; so that all must be baptized to enter into a state of Salvation, or have right to it, and all must believe in order to Salvation, or be bound and engag'd to believe. It does not require that all must actually believe to be sav'd, because the Scripture tells us elsewhere Infants may be sav'd, though, as we suppose now, they cannot actually believe: It tells us this in saying, *Of such is the Kingdom of God.* This Scripture then does not require that all must actually believe to be baptized. And we may agreeably enough with this and the rest of Scripture be engag'd and bound to believe in the taking of Baptism, and therein come to be in a state of Salvation. And so neither does this Scripture exclude from Baptism any more than from Salvation. These people do not believe actual Faith necessary to an Infant in himself, to the putting him into a state of Salvation: Why then should it be necessary to Baptism which is but the Solemn appointed rite and mean of our entering into a state of Salvation? They certainly make the Christian Institution ridiculous while they thus Interpret it; and while they represent that Infants may be in a state of Salvation, that is, may be in Covenant with God without actual Faith, but must not have the Sacrament of admission without actual Faith. If they may be in a state of Salvation, that is, may have a Covenant-right to the favour of God without actual performing the conditions of the Covenant, they may be admitted certainly into that state by the Sacrament of admission without actual Faith. And this may suffice to show the weakness and mistake of this Argument against the Churches practice in Baptizing of Infants.

C H A P. IV.

Wherein the Objection of the Adversaries, that there is no Command for Infant Baptism is proposed and refuted.

A G A I N S T the common and ancient practice of the Church of God in baptizing of Infants, those who have lately taken up a prejudice against it think themselves mighty strong and secure in such an Objection as this: That there is no Command for it in all the New Testament. This Objection, as they make the best they can of it, we commonly hear from them in such Language as this: Show me where Jesus Christ did ever Command Infants to be baptized. If there be no Precept nor Command nor Example of Christ or his Apostles for the Baptizing of Infants, then we may not baptize them: But there is no precept, command or example for this. And what is not commanded is forbidden, especially in Instituted Worship. They say the Holy Scripture is a perfect rule of Faith and Practice, to direct us what we must believe and do, either by Precept or Example, and makes known to us every positive Law and Institution of Christ: But the Holy Scripture does not make known to us neither by Precept nor Example, Infant-Baptism, therefore this is no Institution of Christ.

This is their Objection in their own Language, and in all the force which they are capable to give it. We may see it is double, and insists upon the want of a command for the baptizing of Infants, and the want of an example or president related in the New Testament of this thing. I shall therefore consider this as two Objections, and answer to both the parts of it distinctly and severally; to the

the former in this Chapter, and to the latter in the next.

We are now to consider the Objection, then, as urging that there is no command for the baptizing of Infants and therefore it must not be practiced; because it is not commanded they will have it that 'tis forbidden. And as they commonly understand this argument, and urge it when we converse with them, they appear to mean *an express Command*. They show they are persuaded to think that if Infants might be baptized it would have been said in express words, you *may* or you *ought* to baptize your Infants, and that it must have been said in such express words as these to have made it a Duty, or Lawful to Baptize Infants. I shall answer this Objection in several particulars, and allow my self to say many things against it; Not because there is any more strength in this than in the rest of their Objections, for 'tis a very weak and foolish one; But because I find it is that which commonly prevails most with ignorant and unstudied people, and it is among them all the chief argument of their Party, and that which is first and last insisted on if we discourse with any of them. Indeed this is the main foundation of all their disputes and writings against the baptizing of Infants: And sometimes when they make show of a heap of Arguments against this, they are all but this one Argument turn'd into various shapes, they may all be reduced to this, and have all their strength from this; so that if this be a weak or a false Argument they have not a good or a true one against the Baptizing of Infants, and that I shall make appear concerning this Argument fully in what follows.

1. It should be observ'd, That we no where find in all the Scripture in express words such a precept or rule as this, that we must not believe or do any thing in Religion but what we do find expressly commanded in the word of God. This is then a law of their own invention, an addition of theirs

to the word of God, and we are not bound to be govern'd by it, and they ought for this, to repent of their presumption and sin in adding to the word of God, and to forsake that sin. This is a principle which destroys it self because it cannot be prov'd by exprefs Scripture. If we were bound to believe and do nothing but what is exprefsly commanded in Scripture we ought to have this command exprefsly deliver'd in Scripture, but that it is not. When they say then, shew me where the Baptizing of Infants is exprefsly commanded, we may say to them, shew us where'tis exprefsly commanded that we shall not believe or do any thing in Religion but what is exprefsly commanded. If they goe to prove this by consequence from Texts which represent the sufficiency of Scripture, and that the Holy Scripture is a perfect rule of Faith and Practice, as it is not a true consequence from thence, such Scriptures do not conclude that we must have exprefs Scripture for every thing, so that way of arguing destroys it self. For such arguing derives all its force and strength from this principle, that what may be gather'd by consequence from Scripture may oblige our Faith and Practice; And to goe about to prove by consequence from Scripture, that we must have exprefs Scripture for all that we believe or do in Religion, is to goe to prove by consequence that we must not prove any thing by consequence; it is to argue by consequence that we must not regard any thing which can be deriv'd and prov'd only by consequence: 'Tis to go about to prove without exprefs Scripture, that we must believe nothing but exprefs Scripture. And I should wonder extreamly if any person could be found so weak or so partial to the Sect as not to see the perverseness and folly of this way of arguing, when it is thus stated to him.

2. We have to say against this Objection, that these poor people condemn themselves in many things by this Rule or Principle, that we must not believe or

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do any thing in Religion but what we have express Scripture for. This I shall make appear in many particulars.

It appears first in what has been said already : For 'tis certain they have not express Scripture for this Rule or Principle that we must have express Scripture for all that we believe or do in Religion ; they condemn themselves if they believe this because they have not express Scripture for it.

Again ; If we may not do any thing in Religion which we have not express command in Scripture for ; neither may we believe what is not expressly deliver'd in Scripture as what we ought to believe : We must certainly have the divine direction and warrant for what we may believe as for what we may do. And then this principle of theirs utterly condemns themselves in this, that they will believe the Salvation of Infants who die without Baptism. They pretend to believe this and will pretend to it, though there is not any one express Scripture for it in all the New Testament. The ground in Scripture which they produce for this belief is those words of our Saviour, *Of such is the Kingdom of God,* (*Mark 10.*) But our Saviour does not say there, *Of such is the Kingdom of God without Baptism*, nor is this said any where else, there is then no express Scripture to warrant this Belief. They certainly condemn themselves, then, while they will hold and believe that Infants dying without Baptism are certainly sav'd, though there be no express Scripture which says any such thing, and will at the same time maintain that we must not believe any thing in Religion which we have not express Scripture for. But there is a mystery of Iniquity in this thing. They will hold and profess to believe the Salvation of Infants dying without Baptism, though their main principle upon which they oppose the Church in the baptizing of Infants does directly condemn it. This they do the better

better to recommend themselves to the People, the most ignorant of whom would be likely to abhor and forsake them if they did openly avow and profess to believe that all that die in infancy are certainly damn'd. To avoid therefore the making themselves odious by this, they condemn themselves in holding things that are a contradiction to one another: And while they profess to believe the certain Salvation of Infants, their common Arguments against the baptizing them do conclude against it, and this fundamental Principle of their Error does so among the rest; That we must not believe or do any thing in Religion but what we have express command in Scripture for; because there is no express Scripture that says we must believe the Salvation of Infants that die without Baptism.

Further; they have no express Scripture, or Command of our Saviour, or his Apostles, for confining the Subject of Baptism to those that make profession of their Faith. It would be of use to their People, I believe, to observe that we do not differ from them upon this Question, Whether or no those that believe or make profession of their Faith may be baptized, we do as well as they believe that such may be baptized, if they have not been baptized before: But the Question is, Whether or no *only* such as make profession of their Faith may be baptized. And we deny that *only such* are the meet Subjects of Baptism, and they while they will hold this have not one Scripture to prove it. It is no where said *only* those that are taught, or believe, or make profession of their Faith may be baptized. It may be observ'd, that all the Proofs which they pretend to bring from Scripture, for this Principle which they divide from the Church upon, and condemn the whole Christian Church for, are only deriv'd by consequence from some Texts, they have this Rule no where expressly deliver'd in Scripture. Their Belief,

to turn their own Language upon them, is so darkly and obscurely deliver'd in Scripture, that it can only be prov'd, if at all, by Consequences from Scripture. And then if they will have this to be a Law or Rule of Christ, That every positive Law and Institution must be deliver'd in exprefs words, they condemn themselves ; for they have not any such Institution of Christ in exprefs words as they govern themselves by. If a positive Law and Institution of Christ may be gather'd by consequence from Holy Scripture, then it may be enough to justify the baptizing of Infants together by consequence that this may and ought to be done : If a positive Law and Institution of Christ may not be gather'd by consequence, but must be expressly deliver'd in all that we may do upon it, then these People act without a command in confining Baptism to those that make profession of their Faith ; for there is no such Law or Institution of Christ as this, that *only such* shall be baptized.

Again, They have no exprefs Command in all the New Testament for a weekly Sabbath : or one day of religious Rest to be observ'd in a week, nor for making the first day of the week their weekly Sabbath : And certainly this proportion of time for religious Rest, that is, one day in seven, and this day of the seven to be set apart for it, must be of positive Institution, or of none at all. But we have this no where deliver'd or made known in the New Testament by Christ or his Apostles as a positive Institution of our Lord, 'tis no where commanded ; therefore they do themselves, in observing this for a weekly day of religious Rest, that which is not commanded. It may be said to them then, in answer to this objection, Shew me in all the New Testament, where it was ever commanded by our Lord or his Apostles, that we must separate one day in seven for a day of religious Rest, no more nor no less, for ordinary ; and that this one day of the seven must be the first day of the week, and no other.

Again,

Again, They have no exprefs command of our Saviour or his Apostles for adminiftring the Lord's Supper to Women, yet I fuppofe they do admit them to this Sacrament. But the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is as pofitive an Inftitution as is the Sacrament of Baptifm. And then if a pofitive Inftitution muft diftinctly exprefs all thofe to whom it may be adminiftered, they ought not to adminifter the Lord's Supper to Women, becaufe they are not exprefly mention'd in the pofitive Inftitution. They have no proof but by confequence that this may be done; they urge for it that Text, 1 Cor. 11. 28. *Let a man examine himfelf, &c.* Why fhould not the unlearned among them believe that becaufe the word Man is only put there, the Women are excluded, as well as that the word Man in *John 3. 3, 5.* fhould confine thofe Texts to grown Perfons. But their Guides tell them that the Greek word here in this Text does include both Men and Women; to which it may be faid it does not always include both Men and Women. In 1 Cor. 7. 1. 'tis plain it fpeaks of Men diftinct from Women; and then this is not an exprefs Scripture, fuch as they would have to juftify Infant-Baptifm, for the giving the Lord's Supper to Women. But if it be enough to juftify this that Women may be included in the Word, though they are not diftinctly exprefs'd, Why is it not enough to juftify the difcipling of Infants by Baptifm, when our Saviour's Command is to difciple, or admit Difciples among all Nations by Baptifm? Does not that general Command include Infants too, though they are not diftinctly exprefs'd? And why may we not conclude the ordinary neceffity of Baptifm to Infants that they may enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? when our Saviour fays, Not any one fhall without that enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Are not Infants included in that general Expreflion? Can that be then an exprefs Scripture for Womens Communion, where they are only included and not

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express'd, and those not express Scriptures for Infant-Baptism, where, in a Command for Baptism, Infants are only included and not express'd? It remains then notwithstanding this Scripture that we may still say, If it be an Argument against baptizing Infants that the Scripture makes known every positive Law or Institution of Christ, but does not make known the baptizing of Infants, because they are not expressly mention'd in the Law or Institution of Baptism; then 'tis an Argument against administering the Lord's Supper to Women, because they are not expressly mention'd in the Law or Institution of the Lord's Supper.

Again, They have no express Command from Christ or his Apostles for administering the Sacrament of Baptism by dipping the whole Body entirely into the Water. It is their ignorance to think that this is oblig'd by the word used by our Saviour in his Command to administer Baptism in *Mat. 28. 19.* It is not the necessary signification of the word Baptize, as has been abundantly prov'd by several Writers; and these People must needs have known it by this time, if they would but give themselves leave to believe and be taught by any but such as deceive them. The New Testament speaks of Washings that were perform'd by applying Water but to one part of the Body, under the name of Baptizing, and speaks of such Washing, as if it were the baptizing of the whole Man. In *Mark 7. 4.* 'tis said of the Jews, That *when they come from Market they eat not, except they wash*: The Greek is, *Except they be baptized.* This washing or baptizing of themselves we may learn was done only by applying Water to the Hands, and washing of them, as the 3^d verse shews us; for 'tis there said the Pharisees wondred at our Saviour's Disciples, for that they did eat with defiled, that is, with unwash'd hands: so that this Text of Scripture evidently applies the Word Baptized, to the washing only of one

one part of the body. Therefore the word in the Command does not oblige or express that in Baptism, the Body must be totally dipp'd or plung'd all over into the Water: The Scripture it self here calls that a Baptism of Persons, wherein they had only their hands wash'd. It is a vile Falshood then for any Man to say, as one of their Guides does, That all the washing which has the name of Baptizing given it in Scripture, is perform'd by a *total* dipping of the Person baptized; and while they that pretend to Learning among them, and to understand the Originals of Scripture do thus teach the poor ignorant Teachers and People, they cheat and deceive them all. Again, we shall see that Baptism, or the washing, which the Holy Scripture gives that name to, has been perform'd by sprinkling or pouring Water. This appears in the remainder of that 4th ver. of the 7th Chap. in St. Mark, where the Evangelist adds of the Pharisees; *And many other things there be which they have receiv'd to hold, as the washing of Cups and Pots, and Tables, or Beds*; which last word means the places whereon they lay at their Meals, or the Tables whereon they set their Provision: But it cannot be imagin'd that they wash'd these before they went to eat, by plunging them every day into Water; they certainly satisfied themselves with pouring or sprinkling Water upon them, and this is call'd by the Spirit of God baptizing them. The word we render Washing, is in the Greek, Baptism. These People then have no express command of our Lord for dipping the Persons they baptize intirely into the Water.

Now if this be a true Principle, That we must for every positive Institution of Christ have express words, these people are condemn'd by it in all these usages, and ought to forsake them. If these usages are lawful and allow'd, then is this a false Principle, because it may be lawful and is allow'd

to do that which is not expressly commanded in the Institution: Their Practice condemns their Principle, or their Principle their Practice. And that is certainly an Error which is so disagreeing with it self; on one side or other they must be mistaken: And then this is no reasonable or true Argument against the baptizing of Infants, that such are not expressly mention'd in the Institution of Baptism.

3. That this is a false Principle and Rule will thus appear:

We may gather by consequence from Scripture both matters of Faith, and matters of Practice, what we ought to believe, and what we ought to do in Religion: And this the Holy Scripture it self teaches and allows us to do. And herein may be seen the advantage which our Rule has of theirs. Their Rule is, That we must have express Scripture for every thing that we believe or do in Religion; and for this they have no proof at all, because this cannot be prov'd by consequence from Scripture; for that were to condemn the Rule by the very way that were used to prove it: Nor is it any where made known in express words; so that we are upon sure ground in our Opinion and Practice, and they have no ground at all in theirs. We are upon sure ground if the Scripture it self teaches and directs us to gather matters of Faith or matters of Practice from Scripture by consequence where they are not express'd, and this I shall evidently show it does.

I shall in the first place observe, That we may gather and conclude a Point of Faith, or what we ought to believe from the Holy Scripture where it is not express'd. And we have our Saviour himself teaching that this may be done by his own practice and example; By what himself has done in this case he has shown what may be done, and that we ought to believe, what may be gather'd by consequence from the Holy Scripture, though it is not express'd there,

there. We may see this in *Mat. 23. 31, 32.* There was a foolish, and perverse Sect among the Jews in our Saviour's time call'd the Sadduces, who would acknowledge no part of Scripture for a Rule of Faith and Practice but only the five Books of *Moses*. These Sadduces would not believe the Doctrine of the Resurrection of our Bodies from Death, because they said, it was no where taught in the 5 Books of *Moses*. And they had fram'd an Objection against it which they thought a very cunning one, and with which they had been wont to puzzle weak people, and they came and propos'd it to our Saviour, supposing they should baffle him by it too. Our Saviour, we are to observe to our purpose, does not set himself to shew them any place within the 5 Books of *Moses* where this Doctrine is expressly delivered, but brings them a Passage from whence it might be gather'd and concluded as a sufficient proof of it, and thought that might determine the matter; the Passage he refers to is in *Exod. 3. 6.* *As touching the Resurrection of the dead* (says he) *have ye not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying; I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living.* There is not in this Text the least word express'd concerning the Resurrection from the Dead, yet our Saviour uses this Text to prove this, and without doubt it is a good proof of it; and as the Sadduces were forced to acknowledge it so, as appears by their being unable to reply to it, so they were oblig'd by this Text to receive this as a point of Faith though it is not express'd here: And then a point of Faith may be prov'd by consequence from the Holy Scripture where it is not express'd, and we are not oblig'd to have express Scripture for all that we believe in Religion. But if we are not oblig'd to have express Scripture in this case, we may as well certainly gather and conclude what is to be done from the

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the Holy Scripture ; there can be no reason assign'd for any difference in these two cases. We are as strictly bound up in our Faith as in our Practice, and most certainly we may no more believe that as a Divine Truth, as that which God would have us believe, than we may do that as Duty and Commanded by God which is not so. But we have our Saviour himself teaching us that we may gather by consequence from Scripture what we may and ought to believe, and then we may reckon he has therein justified the gathering by consequence from Scripture what we ought to do though it be not express'd there.

But this in particular we may see taught us by the practice of an Apostle, for we shall see such an one gathering from the Holy Scripture a point of practice where it is not express'd. This is done by St. Paul 1 Cor. 9. 9, &c. The Apostle design'd there to teach the Church of *Corinth* that they ought to contribute and afford a sufficient Maintenance to those that were call'd and set apart to the preaching of the Gospel. This he would have them understand to be commanded by God in that Scripture, *Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn.* Might not that people, if they had been possess'd with the Spirit of those whom we have to do with in this controversy, have return'd to him, that this was a Text not at all to his purpose, because there is not one express word in it either of Ministers of the Gospel or their Maintenance? But doubtless the Spirit of God instructed the Apostle that this Duty might be prov'd and was a necessary consequence from that Scripture, and being a necessary consequence from that Scripture it was therefore a Duty, and might be urg'd as a Duty from thence; then a thing may be urg'd as a Duty which is but a consequence from Scripture. We may see in the following words that the Apostle applies this as a

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Law of God for the maintaining the Ministers of the Gospel, though there is not the least express mention of any such thing in that Law. This is what the Apostle has not only once done. We see him again producing the same Text of Scripture for the same purpose, 1 Tim. 5. 19. *The Scripture, says he, saith Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn, and the Labourer is worthy of his reward.* This is there applied to urge the Honour of a Maintenance, spoken of in the verse before, which he would have to be paid to those who labour'd in the Word and Doctrine. Thus the Spirit of God by the Apostle teaches us that we may gather a command of God from a Text of Scripture where the thing is not express'd. We may gather one Command from another of a like sort and nature where there is a Parity of Reason in what is express'd and what is gather'd. And we may, it appears, hereby, gather and conclude a Point of Duty under the Gospel from what was commanded in the Law of Moses. And this does certainly justify and strengthen the Argument for the Baptizing of Infants under the Gospel from the admission of such into Covenant with God by Circumcision under the Jewish Dispensation. Which is also further justified by this Apostle in that foremention'd place in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. In that we may see him there gathering an Obligation and Command to maintain the Ministers of the Gospel by Offerings and Contributions of the people from God's enjoyning that the Jewish Priests and Levites who ministred in the Temple should live upon the Tenth of the Product of their Country, and upon other Offerings which were brought to the Temple. These things may satisfy any modest Scrupulosity, that when a thing is commanded in Scripture in the Old or New Testament, another thing of the same nature, and which has the same reason, may be gather'd and concluded from it by Consequence.

Consequence. And then it is no Argument against the Baptizing of Infants that they are not distinctly and expressly mention'd in the Command of Baptism, but that is sufficiently justified and vindicated if it may be gather'd by Consequence from Scripture and from the Command of Baptism, which I think I have already done in the former parts of this Book.

4. It may further serve to take off this Objection to say, that though our Saviour would have Infants baptized, There was no need that they should be mention'd expressly and particularly in the Command to Baptize. These people pretend to think it strange that our Lord should design to have Infants baptized and yet never expressly say this in so many words I will have Infants baptized. And it is urg'd as a distinct Argument but is indeed but a branch of this, That the Doctrine and Practice which reflects upon the Honour and Faithfulness of Jesus Christ, who was not less Faithful than *Moses*, can be no Ordinance of Jesus Christ: They pretending that to assert Infant Baptism to be the will of Christ while he has not expressly deliver'd any such Command is to reflect on his Honour and Faithfulness; For in the Law of *Moses* when Infants were to be circumcised it is expressly said, Infants shall be circumcised; but it is no where in the New Testament expressly said Infants shall be baptized. But if our Lord be said to have signified his will in this case sufficiently without express mention of Infants, then the saying this to be his will does not make him less faithful than *Moses*, nor reflect upon his Honour. If there was no need, beside what he has done in the matter to say this so particularly and expressly as they think he should have done, when we say this we do therein declare that 'tis no reflection upon his Honour or Faithfulness that he did not more expressly and particularly say and declare this.

Let us see then what reason there is to say our

Lord had no need to mention Infants particularly and expressly in his Commission or command to the Apostles to Baptize. Whether he did ever mention them particularly to his Apostles or not we do not know because it is not said he did ; and it is very absurd and unreasonable to conclude he never did so because it is not said he did ; unless we were any where told that all which he said to his Apostles is related ; but on the contrary we have an intimation in the latter end of St. *John's* Gospel that all he did and said is not related. If he did mention Infants in his first Order or Commission to the Apostles to Baptize, which is not related when or in what terms it was given, then there was no need to mention them again in that Command or Commission for Baptism which is related after his Resurrection. It was not necessary to them that he should do this who had received his direction in the matter before, nor was it necessary to the Church of God after them. For the Church of God would have sufficient direction in a matter of Practice from their Practice, and their Practice without doubt was according to the Direction he had given them ; so that there was no need to mention Infants particularly in the Command or Commission which he gave his Apostles, upon his leaving the world, to baptize. But I shall produce some further good grounds for this Assertion.

There was no need to express Infants particularly because the Command is in general terms and includes all. He says *God ye Disciple all Nations baptizing them* ; which is a Command in general to administer Baptism among the people of the world, and to admit them by this Ceremony or Sacrament into the School or Church of Christ, and into the Number of Disciples to him. With the same largeness of expression he speaks of this Sacrament as the common appointed way of entering into the same relation

on to him under the Name of the Kingdom of God, in *Joh. 3. 5.* Where the expression is, *Except one be born of Water,* which is as much as to say, *Not any one but such as are born of Water shall enter into the Kingdom of God.* But when he has made this a common Ceremony of admission for all, there was no need that he should mention any particulars. Are not Infants included under the phrase of all Nations, and under such an expression as none shall enter that is not born again of Water, &c? He has not expressly mention'd any particular sort of persons, neither Men nor Women, Old nor Young. If he had mention'd expressly any particulars there might have been some ground for a Scrupulous mind to think those who were not mention'd were excluded: But when he has mention'd none we cannot doubt but it was because he would include all and exclude none. If he would have any excluded he would certainly either not have used so general an expression at all, or he would have limited it by the express exception of those whom he would have to be excluded. It were very absurd, 'tis plain, to interpret any other of the Commands of God as these people Interpret this, and they themselves would hardly like such an Interpretation in another case: If any particular sort of persons should say of a general Command, that because they are not express'd they were not intended to be included in it; How would the rich among them like it; for instance, If the poor should say the Command, *Thou shalt not steal,* does not concern them because they are not express'd in it; that it must be understood of the rich only and such as have no need to steal, but for them they not being mention'd are left out. And thus indeed all sorts might Interpret themselves out of the reach of every general Command, and, as has been said, the Commands which expressly include all might thus be Interpreted to exclude

all. This were full as reasonable as it is to say that our Saviour must needs have mention'd Infants particularly and expressly if he had intended to include them when he spoke of Baptism as the common way of entering into the Kingdom of God, and when he gave his Apostles their last Commission and direction to baptize. With more reason certainly we say that since he gives the Commission in general terms, and such as in their Natural Signification include all, he has excepted none, and so the Command includes Infants with all others.

Again; There was no need to mention Infants expressly and particularly in the Command to baptize, because the Church of God had been expressly commanded before, and had long been wont to admit Infants into the state which they are to be brought into by Baptism, and that by a Sacrament appointed to admit them. The Church of the Jews had by God's order long done this in the Administring Circumcision to Infants of Eight days old: And there is nothing done to them in the Baptizing them but what was done in Circumcision. They were in their Circumcision brought under engagement to serve and honour God; and, then, according to the Law of *Moses*, they are by Baptism brought under the same Engagement; but now to do it, according to the Law of Christ. They were admitted to a Covenant-right to the Favour of God and everlasting happiness therein, and they are admitted to the same by Baptism. This is an entering into Covenant with God as that was, and the taking Circumcision was an entering into that Covenant which is the method and way of Salvation as Baptism is, and so Infants were admitted then by a Sacrament into a state of Salvation, as this is done now by Baptism. And when all this had been done by God's appointment before, there was no need to appoint it a-new. There was, then, Direction
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and Command enough for baptizing even Infants in the Command of Circumcision, when the Sacrament of Baptism was appointed for such use and end as it is design'd for. This is enough to warrant this practice, and to satisfy us that 'tis not against the mind and will of God. The Command of God to Circumcise Infants show'd that he is willing to take them into Covenant with himself: It show'd too that when a Sacrament is appointed to admit any persons into that happy state, they for whom it is appointed must in that way and by that means be brought into Covenant with him, and none of them may expect his Covenant-mercies or a Covenant-right to them but upon entering into Covenant with him in that way, and by taking that Sacrament ordinarily. And when he says upon the appointment of Circumcision, *the man-child the flesh of whose fore-skin is not circumcised shall be cut off from his people*, as in Gen. 17. 14. This evidently lays it as a Law upon his Church throughout all ages, that when a Sacrament is appointed to bring all Persons into the number of his peculiar people, which Infants are capable of, they must, by being brought to that Sacrament, be brought into the number of his people or be admitted into his Church. This may well be gather'd from such a Scripture, especially when there is such an enforcement of the New Sacrament as that, Except one be born of Water and of the Spirit, &c. It may be consider'd further to make good this assertion, that the Gospel was first preach'd to the Jews, that they to whom the Commission was given to Baptize were of that Nation who had been acquainted with the will of God in this matter, who therefore must needs understand a general command to baptize, to include Infants, unless they had been expressly excepted, and to include the Infants of both Sexes since 'tis a Sacrament which both are capable of. And 'tis considerable to

our purpose also, that the Christian Church is but the Jewish Church continued, both are the Church of God, the select number among Mankind who bear a peculiar relation to him, by solemn bond and engagement; Therefore when the Christian Church was to be constituted by a Sacrament of admission into it as the Jewish Church was, and the Jewish Church had by a known express order admitted Infants, it was enough to establish the New Sacrament of Admission in general terms, and such as would include all persons to signify that he would have Infants also admitted by it.

Again; there was no need to mention Infants expressly because they have need of what Baptism is appointed for and they are capable of it. They must have still as much need as ever to be admitted into Covenant with God, and a state of Salvation, which none are born in; and they must be as capable of being in Covenant with God under the Gospel as under the Law, and then there was no need to mention them expressly in the Command, if our Saviour would have them baptized, since Baptism is appointed to serve such a necessity as theirs. And if the Sacrament had not been as necessary to them for such purpose as to others, or they had not been capable of it, our Saviour would not have delivered the Command in so general terms, but would by some expression have excluded them which he has not done. I have made it appear he has not excluded them by consequence from his way of expressing because they may be disciplined by Baptism as well as others, and this is undeniably evident in that the Holy Scripture gives to them the Name of Disciples as well as to others: And then it must be observ'd too that as he has not excluded them by consequence in the Commission to baptize, so neither has he any where done it in express words.

5. And lastly, Against this Objection, That there

is no Command of our Saviour for Infant-Baptism we may say, it is evidently *allow'd* by him, and that were enough to justify us in it, tho' it be not so expressly commanded, as they do unreasonably require. The Baptizing of Infants is commanded in the general Command to admit Disciples by Baptism; but Infants are not express'd in it as no sort are: 'tis as much an express Command to baptize them, as it is to baptize any. It may be said indeed concerning any sort, whether Men, Women, or Children, 'tis not an express Command to baptize them in these Peoples foolish sense of an express command. But for all that it is at least evidently *allow'd* in this Command by our Saviour, that Infants be baptized: For if this had not been permitted he would not have express'd his Command to baptize in so general terms, and without any limitation to express that he would exclude Infants from it.

I may add, This is evidently *allow'd* by our Saviour in that he has no where forbidden it. Tho' there was no absolute need that he should express them distinctly in the Command to baptize if he would allow, or did require they should be baptized, yet there was absolute necessity, as the case stood, that he should have expressly exempted them, if he would not have them baptized. This will easily appear, that he must needs have express'd it his will to exempt them, if we consider that the Gospel was first preach'd to those who had been wont by God's order to admit such as were Infants into the Church of God by a Sacrament, and the first gatherings of the Christian Church were from among them. And 'tis very probable that they had been accustomed to admit Proselytes or Disciples to the true Religion by Baptism, from among the Heathen Nations, as we are told they did by some of their best Authors. And 'tis certain they had learnt from God himself at Mount *Sinai*, that old and young might be admitted into
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Covenant with God by Baptism, as hath been prov'd from *Exod. 19.* compar'd with *Deut. 5. 2, 3.* It may be consider'd too that God expressly commanded Infants to be admitted into that Covenant, which was the method of Salvation before our Saviour's time, by the application of a Sacrament to them which was then the Sacrament of admission. It was then of absolute necessity that when another Sacrament was appointed for that purpose, if he would not have Infants enjoy the New Sacrament, he should have expressly said this. How much do these People then truly reflect upon the Honour and Faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ, when they will have it that he does not allow, that he has forbidden the baptizing of Infants, when yet he has no where said this. It must needs be that when the Jews receiv'd the Doctrine of the Gospel, and were baptized into Christ, and so entred into that Dispensation of the New Covenant which was now set up, they must believe their Infants might be admitted by the Sacrament now appointed, especially when it was appointed in general terms, and that both Sexes might be admitted by this, it being such as both Sexes were capable of using, and not being appropriated to one as Circumcision had been, unless our Lord had expressly said Infants must not now be admitted by a Sacrament. And for this reason they would certainly have been told this if it might not be: The Faithfulness, Justice, and Goodness of our Lord would have made the matter plain enough not to lead or expose them into such a mistake if it had been a mistake.

And then 'tis certainly allow'd by our Saviour if it is not forbidden: If we must have express Scripture for our Rule, we must not reckon this forbidden, unless we could find it expressly forbidden. There is no reason why we should take a thing to be forbidden which is not expressly forbidden, any more than we may take a thing to be commanded which is not expressly

pressly commanded. And if we must reckon nothing commanded but what is expressly so, we must reckon nothing forbidden but what is expressly forbidden. And then he who makes any thing to be forbidden by Christ which he has not forbidden, he adds to the Law of Christ as much as one that should make a thing to be commanded which is not commanded: This were to add a negative Command to the Commands of Christ. And I wish they would consider so well the sufficiency of Scripture as to be afraid of this. The Scripture is a compleat and sufficient Rule, therefore we must not add to it any either positive or negative Commands; we must take care not to put that upon our Saviour, which he has not done in forbidding as well as in commanding, the danger and sin being alike in both. Therefore if he has not forbidden the baptizing of Infants, we must not forbid it; he has allow'd it, and then 'tis lawful and no Sin: for where there is no breach of any Law, there is no Transgression. If he had forbid it by consequence, we would acknowledge this enough to restrain it and make it unlawful; but that he has not done: And according to their Principle it ought to be expressly forbidden to be reckon'd forbidden, but neither is this done; and therefore it is lawful and allow'd, and there was no reason or need to express it in the Command to Baptize, that Infants should be baptized: and thus much I think may suffice for a full and satisfactory Answer to this their chief Objection, That there is no Command of our Saviour in the New Testament for the Baptizing of Infants.

C H A P. V.

Wherein the Objection, That there is no express Precedent or Example in the New Testament of any Infant Baptized, is consider'd and refuted.

THE other part of the Objection last mention'd which the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism urge against it, comes now to be consider'd; and I speak to it by it self as a distinct Objection, that I may give the more clear and distinct Answer to it, and the more fully show how weak it is, and how unreasonable to build upon it. This Objection taken singly they frame thus.

If there is not one Precedent or Example in all the New Testament of any one Infant that was baptized, then Infant-Baptism is unlawful: But there is not one Precedent or Example of this sort, therefore this is unlawful. Because it is not said in the History of the New Testament that the Apostles did baptize any Infants expressly, they will not believe that they did baptize any, or that Infants were baptized in their times, or by their order: And if it was not practiced in their times, and by their order, they conclude it was not commanded nor allow'd by our Saviour, and is no Institution of our Lord; and therefore ought not to be practiced. This is an Objection or Argument drawn by consequence against our Practice, as indeed they have none but such; and therefore all that they say to disparage the Arguments which we bring by consequence from Scripture, as such may be return'd upon themselves. But I shall answer this Argument in several Particulars, which shall discover the consequence to be false which they depend upon in it, and shall show that tho' it is not expressly said in the History of
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the New Testament, that the Apostles, or any by their Order did baptize any Infants, yet is not this an Argument that they did not, or might not do it, or that it is not lawful or allow'd by our Saviour to be done.

1. And I wish them in the first place to consider fairly that this Argument also does condemn themselves, and this may justly give their mislead People a prejudice against it: For if they cannot condemn our Practice but upon Principles that condemn their own, what reason can there be in those Principles to separate and depart from us, and from the Church of God in departing from us. They are certainly in an Error, and self-condemn'd either in their Practices in Religion, or in this Principle upon which they condemn ours; for it does truly condemn their Practice. If they will stand by their Principle, then let them leave the Practices which it condemns as they ought to do: If they will not do this, as I believe 'tis what they would not care for, because they must further depart from the Christian Church if they should, and make themselves yet more odious to all Christians, then they ought to forsake this Principle upon which they condemn our Practice in Baptizing Infants, because it condemns several Practices of their own. While they cry out against the Baptizing of Infants as not commanded, and as having no Example of it in Scripture, they themselves do those things which are not commanded, and which have no Example of them in Holy Scripture.

For instance; As there is no Command, so we have no one Precedent or Example in the New Testament for setting apart the first day of the Week for a weekly Sabbath, or for a day of religious Rest and publick Assemblies for religious Worship. 'Tis true, we find the Apostles assembled together perhaps on a first day of the Week, which was the day of *Pentecost*, next after our Saviour's ascension into Heaven

ven when they receiv'd the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost; but whether any of the Believers or Disciples were with them then we cannot certainly say: for it may be understood that when St. Luke says in *Acts* 2. 1. *They were all with one accord in one place*: This may mean only the Apostles, who were now twelve again upon the choice of *Matthias*, and who are spoken of last in the Chapter before, and that number seems to be all on whom the Spirit was then poured out, that being the number expressly mentioned in the 14th ver. of this Chapter, where 'tis said *Peter stood up with the other Eleven*, to explain the wondrous thing which then appear'd to the Multitudes gathered together: and 'tis said of the Apostles expressly and only that *many Wonders and Signs were done by them* in the 43^d verse, intimating that this Gift of the Holy Ghost, the Gift of Miracles was at first bestow'd only upon them. But if the twelve only were at first in this Assembly, this will not prove them now in an Assembly for ordinary religious Worship, that is, to administer the Ordinances of Christ to the faithful People of the Church; nor is there a word said of this: We are told they were all with one accord in one place, and that is all, not that they were praying, or preaching, or administering any Ordinance, or part of Publick Worship. And this is the first instance mention'd of their being together on a first day of the Week after our Lord's Ascension. Tho' it must be said of this Instance, it is not very certain that this was on the first day of the Week, and that there is some probability that the day was our Saturday, the last day of the Week, and the day of the Jewish Sabbath. In the Chapter before this, *Acts* 1. 12, 13, 14. We find the Apostles assembled together with others of the faithful People mentioned, and they are said to be employ'd in religious Worship; but that was on the day of our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, and

and that must have been on the fifth day of the Week, which we call Thursday, if the day of *Pentecost* was the first day. The Example of the Apostles should determine us then to set apart that day for a day of Rest and religious Assemblies. But 'tis said also in *Acts* 2. 46. of the faithful People, That *they continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking Bread from House to House*; which signifies their joining daily with the Publick Worship in the Temple according to the Jewish Religion while that stood, and also their assembling among themselves in private Houses for the Christian Worship, a part of which is here spoken of, as we may understand under the Phrase of breaking of Bread, if we may understand by it their celebrating the Lord's Supper: And this seems to be allow'd by ver. 42. of the same Chapter, because 'tis set there intermingled with Acts of Religious and Publick Worship, with hearing the Apostles Doctrine, and joining in their Prayers as things done together. And in another place the Scripture seems to direct us to understand it thus, as in *Acts* 20. 7. where 'tis said, That *upon the first day of the Week at Troas, the Disciples came together to break Bread, and Paul preached to them ready to depart on the morrow*. This we may suppose was a meeting for common Publick Worship, and St. Paul preached to them, and then the breaking of Bread mention'd may mean the celebrating of the Lord's Supper, which it will seem by this they were wont to do but once a Week in that Church. And if they did come together here on a first day of the Week for religious and common Worship, this is not a Precedent or Example of making this day their weekly Sabbath; for tho' 'tis said they met together on this day, 'tis neither said nor implied that they did not meet together on any other day of the Week, or that this day was by them set apart for this as a stated constant weekly day for such purpose. Nor can it be imagin'd that they

they had an Apostle with them seven days together, as it appears by the Relation that *St. Paul* was so long with them, and that in all those days they had not one Assembly for Religious Worship, and to enjoy the Apostle's Instructions. Further, it may be observed, That if an Assembly for Religious Worship in the Apostles days on the first day of the Week, were a Precedent or Example equal to a Rule or Command for setting apart the first day for Religious Rest, then the Example of the Apostles in joining in the Jewish Synagogues with their Worship of God on the last day of the Week, should be reckon'd equal to a Rule for observing Saturday for a weekly Sabbath. We have several times their observing of this Day, and their preaching upon it mention'd in one Chapter, the 13th of the Acts, besides other places. From all these things 'tis most manifest, that the Practice of the Apostles in this matter being so various, it cannot amount to a Precedent equal to a Rule, for fixing on one day in seven for a Religious Rest, and the first of the seven; and their making this such a day to them is without Precedent or Example in the Apostles times mentioned in all the New Testament. Again, to show them self-condemn'd by this Argument of theirs against Infant-Baptism I may say, That as there is no express Command of administering the Lord's Supper to Women, so there is not one Precedent, express and clear, that any Woman did receive it in the Apostles time. 'Tis said indeed the Disciples came together at *Troas* to break Bread, and it may be reckon'd the Women are included in that Word; but this is not express'd as they would have an express Command or Example for baptizing of Infants. And we find Infants included under this very name of Disciples, as appears from *Acts* 15. 10. compar'd with *Acts* 21. 21. And they acknowledge *Mat.* 28. 19. to be an express Command for baptizing Disciples, yet

yet will not allow it to be an exprefs Command for baptizing Infants, though the Scripture fhows us they may be included under the Name of Difciples as well as Women. They must own then this is not an exprefs president or example for the Communion of Women if the Text in St. *Matthew* be not an exprefs Command for the Baptizing of Infants. Do these people then administer the Lord's Supper to their Women? then they do that which they have no Command of our Lord nor any president or example for in all the New Testament. And it may be said to them, We must not depart one jot from the Institution of our Lord, therefore they ought not to administer the Lord's Supper to Women, for in their way we cannot find that in the Institution of our Lord. It may be said to this as justly as against Infant Baptism, The Holy Scripture being a perfect rule of Faith and Practice, does either by Precept or Example make known every positive Law and Institution of Jesus Christ; But the Holy Scripture does not make known neither by Precept nor Example the Communion of Women, therefore their receiving of the Lord's Supper is no Institution of Christ. Is this a good Argument or not? If it be a good Argument it forbids the giving the Communion to Women; If it be not a good Argument, in their sense of it, and as they urge it against the Baptizing of Infants, then it does not forbid this, but it may be lawfull notwithstanding this Objection.

The same things might be said over again concerning their Dipping or Plunging all over into Water the Persons whom they baptize, for they have no exprefs Command nor any certain example of this in all the New Testament.

2. But I shall proceed further to Invalidate this Argument. And to this purpose it may be said, that the Apostles might baptise Infants, or it might be done

done by their order and in their time though it is not expressly said they did it, or that it was then done. We know and are told that our Saviour did and said many things more than are related, and we believe the same of the Apostles, and of what was done in their times. It is no where said that all which was done or said by them during their abode on Earth is related, and therefore we are not bound to believe that all is related. If all be not related this might be done though it be not related because we are not told that all that was done is related. There was no need at all to mention or relate this in the History of the New Testament if it was done, because it might be known in every Church without the mention of it in writing that it was, and so that it might be done, by the Apostles practice. But if it had not been done, there would have been occasion to say either that it was not, or that it might not be done as we shall see in what follows. We have reason then to believe that it was done because there is no mention of it expressly; so far is it from true that we have reason to believe it was not done because there is no express mention of it; This I shall fully make appear in what remains to be said to this objection.

3. Though it is not expressly any where said that the Apostles did baptize Infants, yet we have a great deal of ground to believe that Infants were baptized in their time, and then it must have been by themselves or their order, and must needs be Lawful. We have very good ground to believe this in the Holy Scripture it self; and also in the Writings of some that liv'd in the Christian Church very near the Apostles times. These are two copious heads of Discourse and therefore I shall divide them between two Chapters and show the former in this and the latter in another Chapter.

The grounds and reasons which we have in the Scripture it self to believe that Infants were baptized in the time of the Apostles, are as follows.

I. We have good ground to believe, that Infants were baptized in the Apostles time, from what we find said by our Saviour Christ and his Apostles concerning Infant Children.

Our Lord himself in *Mark* 10. 14. certainly speaks of Infant Children, as I have prov'd, and of them he says, *suffer the little Children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the Kingdom of God.* This is a plain Command that Infants should be brought by those that have the disposal of them, and should be allow'd by the Ministers of Christ to come to him: That they should be brought to partake of the blessings and benefits which are purchas'd by him for the Salvation of Mankind: It is then a Command that they be brought to use the means appointed by him for the giving them a right to, and making them partakers of, those benefits and blessings, and that they shall be allow'd to use such means; It is then a Command that they be baptized, because that is the appointed mean which they are capable to make use of to this purpose. And then we cannot doubt but the Apostles understood so, and did in this obey our Lord's Command.

Again, Let us see what the Apostles after our Saviour do say of Infant Children; and from hence we may conclude they were baptized. In *Acts* 2. 39. ver. The Apostle tells the Jews that the promise is to them and to their Children. I have prov'd that in these words he means Infant-Children, and that they were allow'd to be partakers of the Common Salvation by Jesus Christ. If then the Promise is to them, the common appointed means of partaking of the Promise must belong to them, otherwise it could not be said the Promise is to them: And then according to the Apostle *Peters* direction

rection here they may be baptized, and must be so to partake the Promise. He directs that those to whom the Promise belongs do repent and be baptized to obtain it; Infants then must take this course as far as they are capable, and since they cannot repent they must be baptized. They must and they may do what they are capable of towards obtaining this cannot be denied; they may then and ought to be baptized, for this of the two means here prescrib'd and directed to is all that they are capable of. And if an Apostle speaks thus we cannot doubt, with reason, but it was the practice of the Apostles time to baptise Infants.

Further; Let us Consider what *St. Paul* says of Infant-Children in *1 Cor. 7. 14.* where he says the Children who had but one Parent a Believer were Holy. Now we know none are reckon'd Holy by Birth in Scripture, in the sense here meant. Holiness is a being dedicated to God, and this by his appointment was done by a Sacrament both before and after the coming of Christ. These Infants he speaks of could not be said to be holy unless they had been dedicated to God by the appointed Sacrament, and that was Baptism, they could not then be said to be holy unless they had been baptized. We have good ground then to believe that the Infants of baptized Parents were baptized in the Apostles days, since we find an Apostle saying of them that they were Holy.

It may be added to this particular, that all which has been produc'd as the grounds in Scripture for the baptizing of Infants, and that has made this practice agreeing with the Doctrine of the Apostles, does give us ground and reason to believe that this was practiced in the Apostles days: For we cannot think but that the Doctrine of the Apostles and their practice in ordering the Church did well agree. and if their Doctrine speaks the ordinary

ordinary necessity of Baptism to Infants, or the allowance and lawfulness of it, they would set up the practice of it; and those things I have very evidently shown, and then have therein given ground to believe that this was practiced in the Apostles time. But I have yet more to say to this purpose.

2. We have good ground to believe that the Infants of those who were Believers and baptized, were also baptized in the time of the Apostles; In that we find no one president or example of the Baptizing of any who were born of believing and baptized Parents when they became grown perions; We have not one Instance of the delaying the Baptism of any such persons till they were able to profess their Faith and Baptizing them then.

I find indeed these people are persuaded that our Saviours Baptism by St *John* is an Instance contrary to this assertion. He was baptized at grown years, and he was the Son of the Virgin *Mary*, who doubtless was a Believer. And they would have it that as we are bound to imitate our Saviour, his Baptism must be the pattern of ours; and he not being baptized before he was arriv'd to grown years, we ought not to be baptized sooner.

'Tis a wonder to all Persons not possess'd with this error, and that are but moderately acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, that this can be thought an Argument against the baptizing of Infants; and is a proof of the deplorable Ignorance in the people that do think it so. And it is a sign that while they chuse their own Teachers they are very sorrily taught to understand the Scriptures, but according to what the Apostle says of such, *they turn away their Ears from the truth and are turn'd to fables.* If I can persuade them to consider this matter a little, they shall easily see this is a meer delusion and not an Argument.

It should be consider'd we are speaking of the Baptism of Jesus Christ, not of that of St. *John*, between which two Baptisms there was this difference. The Baptism of St. *John* admitted people Disciples to the Doctrine which he taught; which was that the Messias was at hand and would shortly be reveal'd, and made known to the World, and men must repent and forsake their sins to be qualified and prepar'd to receive the Favours and Benefits which would come by the Messias. The Baptism of Christ, which is that we are speaking of, entred people Disciples to this Doctrine, that this Jesus was the true Messias or Christ and the Saviour of the World. And then the question between us is not whether *John's* Baptism might be administred to Infants or not, but whether or no Christ's Baptism may be so. And therefore our Saviours taking *John's* Baptism when he was at grown years is nothing at all to the matter in question between us because he took another Baptism.

It may be said too, and should be consider'd, that our Saviour could not be baptized by St. *John's* Baptism before he was at the years when he did so, for St. *John* and He were both of an age and born within the space but of a few Months of each other. And *John's* Baptism did not begin, was not set up before our Saviour was grown to years of discretion, but certainly he could not be baptized with that Baptism before it was begun. That he was not baptized before then, is no Argument that he might not or would not if that Baptism had been begun, have been baptized before. Nor does it make his Baptism an obliging pattern to ours in this respect unless he could have been baptized in his Infancy by St. *John* but would not be so.

Further, If our Lords example is in all respects to be our rule none should be baptized till they are about 30 years of Age, nor in any river but
Jordan,

Jordan, and no one should receive the Lords Supper but once, and that at the point of Death, and then with Men only, because therein he has Christs example for his Pattern. And as *Gregory Nazianzen* says to some who being converted younger to the Christian Religion pretended our Saviours example for delaying their Baptism to these years, There is not a parity of Reason, nor must we make an ill use of a good example. Many things are read concerning Christ which are above us, and which are not precisely propos'd to our Imitation: Christ fasted 40 Days, we do it but according to our ability; he gave his Passover to his Disciples in an upper room, and after Supper on the day before his Passion, we do it says he (and this he speaks of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper) in the house of Prayer, and before Supper, and after his Resurrection. (*Orat. 40.*) It is well said, in an excellent Book lately written against this Errour, to this purpose, that the truth is, Scripture examples of Christ or his Apostles do conclude nothing unless the same reasons and circumstances do concur to enforce our Imitation, and that they do not in the Case before us; For Christ did not deferr his Baptism till Manhood, because he could not sooner give an account of his Faith, who at twelve years old was able to confound the learned Jewish Doctors, as appears in *Luke 2.* (Religious Conference between a Minister and Parishioner Concerning the Practice, &c. in baptizing Infants, &c. printed by *Charles Brome, Lond. 1698*) It should be consider'd that in the use of this Instance they utterly confute their own Argument against Infant Baptism from the necessity of Repentance in order to it. They say Infants have no need of Repentance; but this must goe before Baptism in all that are baptized therefore they may not be baptized. It may be answer'd, but you reckon our Saviours Baptism a Rule and Pattern to whom Baptism may be ad-

ministred then you must baptize Infants: Our Saviour needed no repentance and was baptized, therefore you ought to baptize all that need no repentance, therefore you ought to baptize all Infants who according to your own Opinion need no Repentance.

Again, we cannot tell whether or no the Virgin *Mary* may be reckon'd a Believer when Christ was baptized by St. *John*, though she was so without doubt afterwards, and to make the Instance fully to their purpose she must have been a Believer at and from the time of our Saviours Infancy. But 'tis certain she was not a Baptized believer such as we are speaking of, such whose Infants they say may not be baptized; to be sure our Saviour had not gather'd any Disciples before himself was baptized by St. *John*; and his Baptism was not begun; His Mother could not be a baptized Believer in him, that is, with his Baptism, at the Time that he was baptized by St. *John*; she could not be by Baptism admitted into his Church before his Baptism and his Church was begun. The Baptism then which we are speaking of was not Instituted before this, therefore our Saviours Baptism by St. *John* is not an Instance of that sort we are speaking of. It is not an Instance of a grown Person baptized whose Parents were Believers and Baptized with his Baptism at the time of his Infancy; and therefore this is not an Instance or President to their purpose, or of the baptizing of such grown Persons as they pretend to conclude from our Saviour's Baptism may be baptized. And then still it may be said we find no one President of the Baptizing of any grown Persons who were born of Parents that did believe and had been baptized with Christian Baptism, at the time of the Infancy of those grown Persons in all the History of the New Testament.

I shall now improve this to our purpose having vindicated the Truth of it. These people baptize the Posterity of believing and baptized Parents when they are grown to years of Understanding and pretend that none but such should be baptized. But we can say there is not one president or example of any such baptized in all the History of the New Testament. There is mention made indeed of the Baptizing of several grown Persons, but they were such as were converted to Christianity when they were grown, not such as were born of Parents that were Believers and baptized at the time of their Birth and Infancy. It is not said of any one there that their Parents were Believers at the time of their Birth and Infancy, and yet that their Baptism was delay'd till they were grown, and received by them then. And it should be consider'd that the space of time which is taken into the whole history of the New Testament is reckon'd to have been about 60 Years: But in that time there must have been many Infants born of believing and baptized Parents, and many of them must within that time have been grown to years of Discretion: But we do not read of any such that they were baptized at those Years. It may be concluded then that they were baptized in their Infancy, for we cannot think that they were not baptized at all, because we do not read of the baptizing of any such. If we cannot conclude such were not baptized at all because we do not read that any such were baptized, We cannot conclude they were not baptized in their Infancy because we do not read they were baptized in their Infancy. And if we may believe they were baptized at all, we may believe they were baptized in their Infancy, because we do not find that they were baptized at grown years; we do not find that their Baptism was deferr'd till then, we have neither Rule nor Example for this. And thus

thus again we see the Argument of these people condemning themselves, they have no president or example for what they do in this matter. As this is a ground to believe that the Infants of believers and those that were themselves baptized with Christs Baptism were baptized in the Apostles times, so 'tis a proof of this people's inconsistency and disagreement with themselves.

3. It is a good ground to believe the Infants of Believers were baptized in the Apostles daies, That we find no mention in the Scripture of any Question or Dispute concerning this matter, whether it might be done or not; If it was done there was no room or occasion for any question or dispute about it because the Ancient Custome of the Church, appointed and allow'd by God in former times, and down to that time, of admitting Infants by a Sacrament, and the practice of the Apostles, would justify it sufficiently, and there could be no reason for any to question or scruple the doing it. But if it was not done there would have been some occasion for questioning about it. The reason for which is this: Those who were converted to Christianity from among the Jews knew that their Infants had formerly been admitted into Covenant with God, and a state of favour with him by a Sacrament, and this had been done by Gods own order and appointment: And those people must needs believe, unless the contrary had been told them, that their Children might still be admitted into such a state by the Sacrament now appointed for such admission, and if they had not been assur'd that this might be it is not possible but they must have desir'd that this might be. And this would have occasion'd of necessity the Question, whether it might be done or not, and the Apostles must have had occasion expressly to declare that it might not be done if it had not, or might not have been done, and so important a matter would

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not have been omitted in the relation of the Acts of the Apostles to have prevented a mistake which without it the Church must needs be liable to fall into. It must needs be if Infants had not been baptized, that the Converts from among the Jews must want to be satisfied, that it might not be done as we see they wanted to be satisfied; some of them, about the continuance of Circumcision: And this would have occasion'd the Apostles to have decided expressly in this case as that matter did. There was then certainly no occasion for the Apostles to mention that it might not be done; and in that there is good reason to believe that it was done in their times.

4. There is good ground in Scripture to believe that Baptism was administred to the Infants of baptized Persons in the Apostles time, in that the Apostle *St. Paul* argues against the necessity of continuing Circumcision in the Christian Church, because the spiritual Grace of Circumcision was now afforded by the Sacrament of Baptism. This he very evidently and expressly speaks in *Col. 2. 11, 12.* It may be observ'd he is arguing in that Chapter against the necessity of continuing Circumcision in the Christian Church, to prove this not necessary to Christians among other things he says, That they were in Christ circumcised with the Circumcision made without hands in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh by the Circumcision of Christ: That is, they had enjoy'd the inward and spiritual Grace, the Circumcision of the Heart, they had deriv'd the mortification of corrupt nature, and a change of it for the better from Christ, by the Circumcision of Christ, that is, by his circumcising them. And he says in ver. 12. they had deriv'd this benefit from him in and by the Sacrament of Baptism: *Being buried with him in Baptism, wherein also they were risen with him.* Being baptized into Christ, and having therein put on Christ, as he speaks elsewhere, they had deriv'd from that Union

Union, and the Communion consequent upon it, a Death unto Sin and a New Birth unto Righteousness; they had receiv'd, that is, the inward and spiritual Grace of Circumcision. This he urges to prove that they have no need of Circumcision.

Now we may easily see this had been no Argument at all to prove there was no need of Circumcision in the Christian Church, if Infants had not been baptized: For Circumcision had formerly been administered to Infants, and that to convey to them this inward and spiritual Grace, and they must have wanted that Sacrament still, tho the Grace were now afforded to Christians by Baptism, unless they had been baptized. For their sakes then Circumcision had still been necessary, and then the Apostle would never have urg'd that it was made not necessary by Baptism. The Apostle's Argument certainly means that Circumcision was not necessary to those that were baptized, because that they by Baptism deriv'd the spiritual Grace of Circumcision: If then he would have them believe Circumcision was not necessary to the Church, because of Baptism, he therein evidently implies that their Infants might be and were baptized; if they might not be baptized, to whom Circumcision had been administered, Circumcision might still have been necessary to them, and so to be continued in the Church. And it is very observable to our purpose, That we do never find that they who urg'd the continuance of Circumcision, did urge it upon this score, That Infants might still have a Sacrament that should admit them into the Church of God, or the Covenant with him, and convey to them the Blessings of that Covenant. There was no need to urge it upon this score if Infants were admitted to Baptism, but there had been good ground and occasion for it, and this had been a very good Plea for the continuance of Circumcision if Infants had not then been baptized, unless the Christians had been

been distinctly and expressly taught that their Infants might be in Covenant with God, without having the Sacrament of Admission to this administered to them, or that they might have a Covenant-right to the Favour of God without being in Covenant, or that they have no need of Salvation by Christ, or any other way had been evidently appointed for them of being united to him, and partaking of his Salvation; but by Baptism it must needs have been thought that Circumcision was still necessary to them: But these things were not taught to the first Christians, but the direct contrary to them. We cannot reasonably doubt then but the baptizing of Infants, was taught and practiced in the Apostles times, when the Apostle says that Baptism serv'd in the stead of Circumcision with respect to the Covenant of Grace, and the Blessings of that; and when he says this to satisfy the Christians that Circumcision was now no longer necessary, and might be laid aside without any loss or prejudice to the Church, when he urg'd that Circumcision was become unnecessary, he urg'd that it was unnecessary to Children, as appears by *Acts 21. 21.* His Argument therefore to prove and conclude this, must reach to Children, and include them, and he must design to prove by it that Circumcision was not necessary to them: But the Argument he uses to prove this is that the Grace of Circumcision was afforded and enjoy'd by Baptism; therefore he certainly and necessarily must be understood to signify herein that their Infants were then baptized, and had the Grace afforded them by Baptism.

Lastly, we have good ground to believe that Infants were baptized in the Apostles time, from the accounts we several times have there of whole Families or Households baptized together. This is a good Confirmation of this matter, at least together with the other things which have been said for it. And the rather because we find whole Families or Households

holds said to be baptized, when there is no mention at all made that they did all believe, or were all instructed in the Faith before-hand. Of the Jailour mention'd in *Acts* 16. 'tis said indeed, that as he and all his were baptized; so he believ'd in God with all his House. But in the same Chapter 'tis said of *Lydia*, ver. 15. That she was baptized and her Household, tho' 'tis only said of her, that she had attended to the things that were spoken by St. Paul, and the Lord had opened her heart to receive them. In like manner St. Paul says he had baptized the Household of *Stephanus* at *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. But there is no mention at all made that they were all grown Persons or Believers. Are we not bound to believe that there were any Infants in those Families, because 'tis not said expressly that there were Infants in them, and yet are bound to believe that all of them who were baptized, were Believers, when it is not said they were all Believers? Are we bound to believe there were no Infants in those Families, because 'tis not said there were any there, and yet are not bound to believe any in them were baptized without making profession of their Faith, tho' 'tis not said of all that were baptized in them that they made profession of their Faith? Thus we see this Argument again confounding these wretched People themselves who use it. They would have us believe nothing was done in the Apostles time, but what is expressly said to be done in the New Testament, and that we must exactly follow the Apostles Pattern and Example in administering the Ordinances of Christ: yet they would have us believe that all the Persons of *Lydia's* and *Stephanus's* Households were Believers before they were baptized, tho' 'tis not said, nor is there the least intimation that they were so; 'tis expressly said they were baptized, 'tis not expressly said they believed: We must believe they were baptized, we need not believe they all did first believe, and then we are not bound by the Apo-

bles Practice to require actual Faith of all that we baptize; but we are bound by the Apostles Practice very evident and certain in these Instances, to baptize whatever Children are under the Power, and at the disposal of those that are themselves Believers and baptized. Thus have we very good ground in Scripture for our Belief and Practice in this matter, but these People have none at all.

CHAP. VI.

Wherein is represented that we have good ground to believe Infants were baptized in the Apostles time, in what we find said concerning their Baptism in some of the most early Writings of the Christian Church, soon after their time.

THE great unhappiness of this Sect, and that which renders them much the more indispos'd to be convinc'd of their Error, is the ignorance and want even of a little Learning, which both the most of their Teachers as well as others among them lie under. With this advantage to deceive, there have been those who having set about it, have persuaded them, That the baptizing of Infants is an Invocation, that it was not practiced in the Apostles days, nor used in the Christian Church next after or near their days, that there have been Witnesses against it in every age; and therefore they must look upon it as one of the Corruptions of Religion, which are to go under the name of Popery, and ought to reject and abhor it as such. And this may be consider'd as another of their Objections against this practice of the Church of God. These People are not able to examine the early Writings of the Christian

Christian Church, nor to see how these Men impose upon them in this Account of the matter. And if they are resolv'd to believe those who do herein deceive them, it would be utterly in vain to produce all that can be said on this Head of Discourse which is now propos'd. But because I have already shown so much ground in the Scripture it self, which they can examine, to believe that Infants were baptized in the Apostles time, and have so fully prov'd all their Arguments against it to be false, and of no force, and have given such evidence from particular Texts, and from the general Subject and Doctrine of Holy Scripture, for the lawfulness and duty of this Practice; I would fain hope that some among them, if they will but consider what has been said, will be disposed to believe what I shall now represent to them concerning this matter, tho it be from Authors which they are not capable to examine: And then the addition of this Chapter will be of use to confirm them in the truth which this Book endeavours to convince them of; and upon this hope I shall go about the task propos'd.

Let us see then what grounds we can find in the early Writings of the Christian Church which were publish'd soon after the time of the Apostles to believe that the first Christians did commonly baptize their Infants, and that they receiv'd this as a lawful Custom and Practice even from the Apostles themselves. And I think it will appear that we have very good ground to believe this by the following Particulars. (1.) We find the baptizing of Infants spoken of, and plainly intimated to be the common practice of the Church very near the Apostles time. (2.) We find the first Christians generally perswaded of the ordinary necessity of Baptism to all Persons, and among others expressly to Infants also for their Salvation. (3.) We find it very early said to be a Custom used in the Church from the Apostles times to baptize Infants, and

and to have been deliver'd to it by the Apostles. I shall make good each of these particulars by several Instances.

I say then in the first place, We find the Baptizing of Infants evidently spoken of, and intimated to be the common practice of the Church very near the Apostles times in the Writings of those times.

I shall begin the proof of this from the Writings of *Justin the Martyr*: And shall let alone the Passages commonly quoted out of the Book ascrib'd to him which has the Title of *Questions and Answers to the Orthodox*, though that is certainly a very ancient Book, because 'tis doubted whether he were the Author of it or no; And I shall make use of some passages which we find in his unquestionable Works.

In his Second Apology for the Christians, while he is recommending the Christian Law as more excellent than any that is of Men, he says, "There are many Men and Women of 60 and 70 years of Age among us (that is among the Christians) who having from their Child-hood been discipled to Christ have all their time continued uncorrupt. From their Child-hood persons were, then, in his time discipled to Christ. The word he uses is in *Mat. 2. 16.* applied to the Infants at *Bethlehem* who were of two years old and under, so that there is no necessity from thence to understand him as speaking of Children only from the time that they became capable to be instructed: Besides we have learnt from *Mat. 28. 19.* that there is another way of being discipled to Christ besides teaching, and that persons may be entred or engaged Disciples to Christ by being baptized. These were from their Childhood discipled, therefore young Children may be Disciples, and this Author did not reckon that to deserve the Name of a Disciple, one must be taught with effect and so as to come to make a consider'd

and resolv'd profession of the Doctrine taught. 'Tis certain, young Children could be no other way discipled but by Baptism, and then many of those of 60 and 70 years of age in his time had been so discipled.

Again, The same Author speaks thus to our purpose in his Dialogue with the Jew (p. 26, Ed. Col. an. 1686. " We who by him (meaning Christ) " have obtain'd access to God have receiv'd, not " that Circumcision which is according to the flesh, " but, that Spiritual one which *Enoch* and such as " he preserv'd But that Circumcision we have " through the mercy of God receiv'd by Baptism, " for as much as we were born sinners: And it is " allow'd to all to receive the same in the same way. He certainly speaks of that Circumcision which the Scripture calls the Circumcision of the heart, that is, the mortification of the corrupt and wicked nature in man, the inward and spiritual Grace of Circumcision which the Scripture allows us to reckon may be spoken of as a Death unto sin and a New Birth unto Righteousness, which is the inward and spiritual Grace also of the Christian Baptism. And this the good Man tells this Jew, the Christians receiv'd by Baptism, and that 'tis allow'd to all to receive it by Baptism. Unless then he must be understood to speak of some grace of Baptism which Infants are not capable of he must be reckon'd to include Infants when he says, all may in the same way receive that Grace; but certainly Infants are not incapable of this Spiritual Circumcision. And then 'tis certain he would not have said, all are allow'd to receive this grace by Baptism if he had not known Infants were commonly in his time baptized and might be so.

Now this *Justin* flourish'd in the 2d Century after our Saviours birth: He is believ'd to have been born so near the Apostles time as within 20 years after the Death of St. *John* the Apostle. He spent his

his younger years in the Country of the Jews, and is suppos'd to have been a *Samaritan*. He was educared in the Learning of the Heathens, but receiv'd the Christian Religion in his own Country as he says, by discourse with an unknown old Man. He wrote the Apology we have quoted about the Year 150: and it is judg'd he suffer'd Martyrdom at *Rome* about the Year 166. He must have liv'd then very near the Apostles time, and while many were living in the Church who had convers'd and been acquainted with, and instructed by the immediate Scholars of the Apostles. It cannot be supposed that he should speak of this matter otherwise than according to the Doctrine and Practice of the Church in his time, and then it must be believ'd he spake of it according to the Doctrine and Practice of the Apostles time also, which he liv'd so near to, nor can we with any reason think that it was alter'd so vastly as these people suppose it to be by those who baptize Infants, in so little a time

Next to his, I shall produce the Testimony of *Irenæus*, another very early Writer of the Christian Church, for a proof of this Particular. In his 2^d Book against Heresies in the 39 Chapter, speaking of Jesus Christ, he says, "That he came to save all sorts of Persons by himself, all I say, who are by him regenerated or born again unto God, Infants and little ones, and young and old. Therefore he past through every Age himself, and for Infants was made an Infant, sanctifying Infants, for little Children he was himself such an one sanctifying those of this Age, being also made an example to them of Piety, Righteousness and Subjection; for young men he became a Youth and was made an example to sanctifying them to the Lord, and so goes on to other ages of Life. That which is to our purpose in this passage is, That the good and learned man says, Christ came

to save all sorts of Persons or those of every age; that Infants need his Salvation and are allow'd to have it, they are not excluded from his concern and care. It is observable also that he says, how this Salvation is apply'd, or in what way all whom Christ came to save do become partakers of his Salvation: This he expresses in those words, *All I say who are by him Regenerated or born again to God*; And then he speaks particularly of every Age of Life and among them of Infants as who must be born again to God to be sav'd by Jesus Christ, and who are sav'd by being born again. That he does by this phrase understand, that Infants were baptized and receiv'd this favour in and by Baptism we have just reason to believe in that we find him elsewhere speaking of Baptism under the Name of Regeneration, as we have seen he does in his 3^d Book and 19th Chapter. Where speaking of the Authority which our Saviour had given his Apostles to baptize he speaks it thus: "And again committing to his Disciples the power of Regeneration unto God he said to them, Go ye Disciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. When he says, then, that Infants were saved by Christ in the way of being born again by him unto God he herein explains himself to mean what he says of the Sacrament of Baptism, and so does most evidently intimate that this was the ordinary practice of the Church of God in his time, to baptize Infants. Those who had the power of Regeneration committed to them, doubtless knew whom they might administer this to, and by their practice put the Church into the right way of doing it; But by this Person we see the Church did very near the Apostles times administer the means of Regeneration to Infants, otherwise he would not have said, that such are sav'd by Christ in the Way of Regeneration, meaning it of Baptism; and then it cannot reasonably be

be doubted but the Church in his time deriv'd this practice from the Apostles times, and then that it was in use in the Apostles times. He might well enough say, Infants are born again to God by Jesus Christ as having the Sacrament of Baptism administred to them, because that Sacrament, being the Instrument of their Regeneration, is the Institution of Christ, and because the chief efficient cause of this Regeneration in the use of the Sacrament is the Spirit of Christ.

Now I shall observe concerning this Authour to recommend his Testimony in this Case; That he is reckon'd to have died Bishop of *Lyons* in *France* about 179 years after our Saviour's Birth. He says of himself that he had often convers'd with *Polycarp* whom the Apostles had made Bishop of *Smyrna*: That *Polycarp* taught those things and deliver'd them to the Church which he had learnt from the Apostles. He says, he so long liv'd with this man that he distinctly remembred the form of his Body, the manner of his living, his Sermons and Discourses to to the People, and that he heard him speak of his acquaintance with St. *John*, and others who had seen the Lord while he was on Earth. This *Irenæus* then flourish'd also very near the Death of St. *John* the Apostle, and had certainly great advantage to know what was the Doctrine and Practice of the Church in the Apostles time. And *Tertullian* says of him, that he was a most accurate examiner of all Doctrines. (*Tert. Adv. Valent.*) We cannot suppose then that either through want of means or care to know what was the true Doctrine he should in this speak differently from what was so: And we cannot chuse but think that he spoke this consistently with the Doctrine and Practice of the Church of God in his time, and then also with that of the Apostles and their time.

In the next place I shall produce *Tertullian*, who evidently speaks of the Baptizing of Infants in his time, and by his way of speaking shows it to have

been then the ordinary practice of the Church. These poor people are persuaded that this Author is one of their Witnesses against the Baptizing of Infants, but they are manifestly and grossly deceiv'd herein by those guilty men who so persuade them. I will fairly produce at large the Passage which they abuse and show that it does truly and fully serve the purpose we use it for. We have it in the 18th. Chapter of his Book of Baptism, in these words.

“ The delay of Baptism is more profitable (than the
 “ hasty administration of it which he had been speaking
 “ of before) according to the condition and disposition
 “ of every person, yea and the Age too, especially
 “ of the Baptism of Infants. For what necessity is
 “ there to bring the Sponsors (so he calls those whom
 “ we we call God-fathers and God-mothers) into
 “ danger, for as much as they may fail of performing
 “ their promise by their own Mortality, or may
 “ be deceiv'd and disappointed by the breaking out
 “ of an Evil Disposition. The Lord says indeed, *Suffer the Little Children to come unto me and forbid them not*; Let them come therefore when they
 “ are youths, let them come when they learn, and
 “ when they are taught whither they come, let them
 “ be made Christians when they can know Christ.
 “ To what purpose does the Innocent Age hasten
 “ after the Remission of Sins. We are more cautious
 “ in secular matters: But may a divine portion be
 “ committed to him to whom an earthly one is not
 “ committed; Let them know how to ask for Salvation that you may seem to give to him that asks.

This is the whole of what he says there to this matter, and of what the Adversaries of Infant-Baptism are wont to pervert and abuse. But here we may observe these things following; That he speaks in this but his own private opinion of the matter; he does not say nor give the least intimation that this was the common Opinion of the Church in his time. We may observe

serve too, that he speaks against what was then practised but what he thought were better let alone: and he could have had no occasion to plead against the bringing Infants to Baptism if it had not been a thing done usually in the Church in his time. And so his very speaking against it makes him a witness to this, that it was the practice of the Church so near the Apostles days. Besides it appears that this practice of the Church was reckon'd to be built upon that Scripture by which the Church now Justifies the Baptizing of Infants, that is *Mark 16.14.* in that he endeavours to take off the force of that Scripture. He confesses our Saviour would have Infants suffer'd to come to him, and that this means, that he would have them baptized, in that he says, Let them come when they are grown up. But it is apparent presumption in him to say this: Our Saviour evidently orders that they be suffer'd to come to him while they are Infants, and he advises that they should stay till they are in their Youth. And he could not think this to be the meaning of our Saviour; who said these words to order that Infants, being Infants, should be suffer'd to come to him. It may be observ'd also, that he speaks against this practice as unnecessary and unexpedient, but he does not presume to say, 'tis Unlawful. And he persuades even grown persons if unmarried, *for no less cause* to delay their Baptism till they were married, which he evidently does for fear lest they should be tempted to renounce Christ after Baptism by the allurements of an advantageous Marriage. But then he shows he did not advise against Infant-Baptism upon the account of the Unlawfulness of it, for he could not think the Baptism of grown people if unmarried to be unlawful, yet he says, he advised the delay of Baptism by them *for no less cause* than he advised the other. Besides, there is good ground from the Connexion of this Passage to believe that 'tis spoken of the Infants of Heathen Parents: It was

usual, we know, in the Church in those times for the Christians upon the coming of such Children into their power to bring them to be baptized, but this is that which he advises against in this place: In this Chapter he all along speaks of the Baptism of such as were not born of Christian Parents, such as were the Eunuch and *St. Paul*, whom he mentions, and pretends to give particular and extraordinary reason why they were so suddenly baptized. His business therefore plainly is to advise, that the Baptism of such Children should be deferr'd till they came to years of Understanding, and were able to make a Confession of their Faith, their Parents being Infidels, and the Sponsors mortal. And from other Passages in this mans works we shall see he must be understood as speaking of the Infants of Heathens here, or else that he does contradict himself. And then this Passage does not produce so much as his opinion against the Baptism of Infants which we are pleading for, that is, of those of believing Baptized Parents, much less does he give here the general opinion of the Church of his time against this, or the lawfulness of it. Another Passage we shall find in his works, wherein he plainly refers to the Baptizing of Infants as the Common practice of the Church in his time, and as what might be done, and he evidently there speaks of those Infants one of whose Parents was a Believer and baptized. It is in his Book of the Soul in the 39th Chapter. The whole Passage, which is to our purpose, we have in these words. " And so
" there is not a Birth that is clean, that is to say,
" among the Heathens. For from hence it is that
" the Apostle says, by vertue of one Parent being
" sanctified the Children are born holy which comes
" to pass as well by the Prerogative of their Birth,
" as by the discipline of Institution. Else they
" would be born unclean, but hereby they were the
" Candidates for Holiness or design'd for it, and
" hereby

“ hereby also for Salvation : This he speaks of the
 “ Children of Believers, that by the pledge of this
 “ hope he might authorize those Marriages which he
 “ judged ought to be retained. Otherwise he had
 “ remembred our Lords definition in these words,
 “ Unless one be born of Water and of the Spirit, he
 “ shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; that
 “ is, he shall not be holy : so that every Soul is repu-
 “ ted to be in *Adam* till it is accounted to be in *Christ*,
 “ and is unclean as long as it is accounted to be in *Adam*.

Now to understand this passage the better, and see
 that it serves to the purpose we use it for, it will be
 requisite to consider a little how it is brought in, and
 to what sort of Discourse it is join'd. And to them
 who can look into the place it will appear, That he does
 from the beginning of the Chapter disparage the
 Births of the Heathens, and that upon the account
 of the idolatrous Superstitions which were used about
 their Women, while they were great with Child,
 and when they were in their Labour, and those also
 which were used about the New-born Child. By
 these things he says they were devoted to wickedness,
 and some evil spirit must needs possess their Souls from
 the very gate of their Nativity : so an evil Spirit found
Socrates when he was yet a Child ; and to all there are
 appointed their Geniuses which is the Name of Devils.
 Having thus disparaged the Births of the Heathens
 he proceeds to prefer and recommend those where
 but one Parent was a Believer, and that upon the
 Ground of what *St. Paul* says to the Case in *1 Cor. 7.*
14. to countenance the Believers continuing to live
 still with the Unbeliever. He says, such Births are
 call'd Holy by the Apostle as they were destin'd for
 Holiness : Not but that the Children of a believing
 and baptized Parent were unholy in themselves, as
 well as others, and the Apostle could not mean they
 were actually holy by their Birth, because he must
 needs remember what our Lord had said, That unless

one

one be born again of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot be holy. Accordingly he himself speaks afterwards the want of holiness in their natural state, and says, they are unclean so long as they are in *Adam*, and must become holy by being in *Christ*. He says then such Infants were design'd for Holiness, and that in two respects, both by the Prerogative of their Birth and by the Discipline of Institution. They were design'd for the Holiness which comes by being born again of Water, and of the Spirit: for this he says was necessary to their becoming Holy. They were design'd for this by the Prerogative of their Birth, in which he can mean no less than that they had, as born of one Parent, a Christian, a right to be thus made holy, to be in this way devoted and consecrated to God. And they were design'd for it too by the discipline of Institution, that is, as the Church was oblig'd by the Christian Institution to bring them to be Holy, to be thus consecrated to God to be born of Water, and of the Spirit, that is, to be baptized. 'Tis evident he understood that all become holy by being born of Water and of the Spirit; that such Infants were design'd for this both by the Privilege of their Birth, and by the Law of *Christ*: It follows then, that he did believe they had right to Baptism, and the Church was oblig'd to administer it to them. These things he evidently builds upon these two Texts of Scripture, and then he understood and applied both these Texts, as the Church of God now does, and as they have been interpreted and applied in the foregoing Discourses. Now it cannot be thought he could speak thus of this matter unless this had been the common Sentiment of the Church in his time concerning Infants who had one Parent a Believer, and the Practice of the Church had been commonly agreeable to it. And then we have reason to believe, that the baptizing of such Infants was practiced in the Apostles days, in that

that we find it spoken of as lawful, and commanded by one that liv'd so near the Apostles days. For this *Tertullian* is judg'd to have been born, and to have wrote, at least, some of his Book within less than an hundred years after the Death of the Apostle *St. John*.

In the next place, to our purpose, I shall produce what is said by the Blessed Martyr *St. Cyprian* in his Epistle to *Fidus* (*Ep. 64. Ed. Oxon.*) This Man had wrote to *St. Cyprian* concerning the time of baptizing Infants, and it appears he had thought they ought not to be baptized within 3 or 4 days after their Birth; but the Law of Circumcision ought to be regarded so far as that they should be kept from Baptism till the 8th day. To this the good Man returns answer: "That he and all the Bishops with him
" were of a contrary opinion: That since our Lord
" says in his Gospel, the Son of Man came not to
" destroy Mens Souls. but to save them; we must as
" much as in us lies take care that no Soul be lost. And
" as God is no acceptor of any Persons, so neither of
" any Age and we think not one is to be hindred from
" partaking of the Grace of God by that Law; and this
" was our opinion in Council, That no one ought to
" be with-held from Baptism and the Grace of God,
" who is merciful and kind to all; which we think
" ought to be observ'd with respect to all, but espe-
" cially to Infants new-born. Now this excellent Person is judg'd to have been converted to Christianity in the year 246 after our Saviour's Birth, and to have been made Bishop of *Carthage* in the year 248, and to have suffer'd Martyrdom in the year 258. He then must have written all his works within much less than two hundred years of the death of *St. John* the Apostle. This Epistle is judg'd to have been written in the year 253. It is said in the Title of it to have been sent by *St. Cyprian*, and 66 of his Collegues assembled in Council; so that it speaks not his opinion alone concerning the matters contain'd in it, but that
also

also of 66 other Pastors and Guides of the Church. They had in consideration, it appears, the time of administering Baptism to Infants. It was not at all question'd or consider'd whether or no Infants might be baptized: This was believ'd and taken for granted both by *Fidus*, who had occasion'd the Epistle, and by all these good Men who answer'd him in it. The question was only, whether it must be deferr'd till the 8th day or not, and it was resolv'd and answer'd, that it might be done on any day, it might be done to Infants new-born. It was determin'd that to no one born of Men the Mercy of God and his Grace should be denied, and this was said of Baptism: so that, as must be observ'd, this Council does not establish or determine the lawfulness of Infant-baptism, it plainly supposes that and the practice of it; but the business of the Letter was to correct the Error of some Judaizing Persons then in the Church, who thought themselves oblig'd to defer their Baptism to the 8th day, which was the day appointed for Circumcision. Thus much shall suffice to show, that the baptizing of Infants in the Christian Church is spoken of at several times within the first two hundred years after the last of the Apostles, and so spoken of as to be evidently intimated, to have been in that time the ordinary Practice of the Church of God; and this without doubt is a good reason to believe, that it was the practice of the Church in the time of the Apostles themselves, and was deriv'd from thence. It is not to be imagin'd that the Church was so soon as this left to fall generally into so gross and fatal an Error as these People would have Infant-Baptism to be. They certainly reflect to a monstrous degree upon the Honour and Faithfulness of Jesus Christ who do suppose this.

2. It is a good evidence that in the times immediately succeeding the Apostles the Baptism of Infants was own'd, and usually practiced in the Christian Church; That we find the Church in those times generally

generally possess'd with a belief of the ordinary necessity of Baptism in order to Salvation, and speaking of it either as necessary to all in general terms, or as necessary in particular to Infants. Certainly the Church in those times could not think their Baptism unlawful, if they thought this ordinarily necessary to all Persons, much less if they thought it necessary to Infants. And if we find some eminent and good Men speaking thus of it, and no other Men whatever of those times contradicting them in this, we have therein good reason to believe, this was the common belief of the Church in those times.

I shall begin the proof of this particular with what is said to this purpose by that excellent Person I begun with under the other, who liv'd very near the Apostles time, I mean *Justin the Martyr*. He speaks to this purpose in his 2d Apology for the Christians, (p. 94. Ed. Colon. 1686.) where, after he had been giving an account, that those who were persuaded to embrace Christianity were brought by them where there was Water, and were there regenerated in the same way of Regeneration, wherein those that were already Christians had been so, that is, by Baptism: he adds, "For in the Name of the Father of all things, and of the Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit they are wash'd with Water; for Christ himself hath said, *Unless ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. The reason of their baptizing he lays in that Text, and speaks of Baptism as the Sacrament of Regeneration upon the ground of it. We know too, that the Text he uses, together with the 5th Verse of the Chapter does establish the common and ordinary necessity of Baptism in order to Salvation, and he plainly intimates it does so in his reference to it, and the use he makes of it. And he could not confine the Text to grown Persons without misunderstanding it: For if we consider that our Saviour

our himself here lays the reason of the Necessity of the 2d or new Birth upon the disadvantages of the first or natural Birth, as he evidently does in the 6th verse of the Chapter, in saying, *That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.* This shews that our Saviour's Discourse must be understood to include Infants under the common Necessity of being born again to enter into the Kingdom of God; and so also under the Necessity of being born of Water, or of being baptized. And it does not appear that this Author confines the Scripture to grown persons; he urges the common Necessity of Baptism without any exception of Infants; And this, at least, together with the other Passages quoted from him before, shows that his opinion was for the common Necessity of Baptism in an ordinary way to the Salvation of Mankind. And as in his use of this place of Scripture he shows, that the Church of God did in his time build the practice of Baptizing on a Text which establishes the common Necessity of it; he does evidently show too, that the Church of God thought it necessary to Infants in an ordinary way for their Salvation.

I proceed next in order to *Irenæus* who was next in time. He also evidently speaks the common Necessity of Baptism to a Divine Life, and to Salvation. That which I shall observe to this purpose we have in the 19th Chapter of his 3d Book against Heresies in these words: "As of dry Wheat one
 " Lump cannot be made without moisture, nor one
 " Loaf, so neither we being many can become one in
 " Christ Jesus without the Water which is from
 " Heaven; And as the dry earth if it receives no
 " moisture can bring forth nothing, so we being
 " originally dry Wood, can never bring forth fruit
 " unto Life without the free descent of the Heavenly
 " Showers. For our Bodies receive the Union
 " by that Washing which is to Incorruption, but
 " our Souls by the Spirit: Whence both are necessary

“ necessary for as much as both are profitable to the
 “ Divine Life through the mercy of our Lord Jesus
 “ Christ. In speaking of the Washing which unites our
 Bodies to Christ, and of the Spirit which unites our
 Souls, he evidently refers to that expression of our
 Saviour, that we must be born again of Water and
 of the Spirit to enter into the Kingdom of God :
 And in these two expressions he evidently includes the
 outward Element or Sign and the inward and spiri-
 tual Grace of Baptism: And he expressly says that, both
 are necessary to the Divine Life, and conducing to
 that, which is as evidently as can be to teach us that
 he believ'd the common and ordinary Necessity of
 Baptism in order to our Union to Christ and to our
 living by him.

Again ; we shall see *Tertullian* also asserting and
 proving the Common and Ordinary Necessity of
 Baptism, to Salvation and that too from the Discourse
 of our Saviour in *John* 3. He in his Book of
 Baptism in the 12 Chapter speaks thus. “ It is pre-
 “ scrib'd or appointed that no man shall attain Salva-
 “ tion without Baptism, and this chiefly in that sen-
 “ tence of our Lord, Unless one be born of Water he
 “ shall not see Life. In the 13 Chapter. of that
 Book he expressly opposes some who said, Baptism is
 not necessary to them that Believe, but their Faith is
 sufficient: And against them he says, “ The Law
 “ of Baptizing is impos'd, and the form prescrib'd ;
 “ Go ye, says he, teach all Nations, baptizing
 “ them in the Name of the Father and of the Son
 “ and of the Holy Ghost. To this Law that De-
 “ finition being added, Unless one be born of Wa-
 “ ter and of the Spirit he shall not enter into the
 “ Kingdom of Heaven, it binds our Faith to the
 “ necessity of Baptism ; and so even those that be-
 “ liev'd were also baptized. Now when he
 thought Baptism so necessary, can we think it was
 his opinion that Infants might not be baptized ? Es-
 pecially

pecially when, in the place quoted from him before, he appears to say, that such, though born of one Parent, a Believer too, must be born of Water and of the Spirit to enter into the Kingdom of God; And here he evidently applies these words of our Saviour as speaking of Baptism and establishing the Common necessity of that. In this latter place he urges the necessity of Baptism to Salvation even where there is Faith, much rather than must he be accounted to believe it necessary where there is not Faith, and therefore necessary to Infants, and especially when he urges from Scripture the common necessity of it without making the least exception of Infants.

We see then this Opinion of the Common Necessity of Baptism in an ordinary way to all persons for Salvation deriv'd from the Holy Scriptures very near the Apostles times. We may then reasonably judge, that those who speak this afterwards and assert in particular the Necessity of this Sacrament to Infants, learn'd it from these times, as the men of these times we may believe learn'd it from the time of the Apostles, or from those who were their Scholars and convers'd with them. And we shall find that this belief continued in the Church, and was maintain'd by the Guides of it, in the times after these men that have been mention'd. I shall produce a few, of many Instances and Proofs of this.

Gregory Nazianzen in his 40th Oration, which is concerning Baptism, speaks plainly the ordinary and common Necessity of this Sacrament, and extends it particularly and expressly to Infants. "Hast thou an Infant? says he there, let not wickedness prevent thee, let it be sanctified from its Infancy, and consign'd from the first to the Holy Spirit; this he speaks of Baptism. And after a long discourse against the delay of Baptism, which upon several pretences or one other in those days, who were in

in their judgment perswaded to Embrace the Christian Religion, were ready to plead for, and allow themselves in, He proposes this Question: "What will you say concerning those who are yet Children and neither know the loss nor are sensible of the Grace of Baptism shall we also baptize them? To which he answers yes by all means if any Danger urges; For 'tis better that they should be Sanctified without a sence of it, than that they should depart without the Seal and the Initiation. And of this thing Circumcision is a good reason to us, which was wont to be perform'd on the 8th. Day, and was administred to those who were void of the Use of their Reason. Thus he speaks of this matter there In these things 'tis very evident that it was his opinion that Infants might be baptized, and in his first expression concerning them, at least, it is intimated to have been the common Opinion of the Church: And his urging the hastening of this where there was any danger of an Infants death speaks evidently his Opinion of the necessity of this in an ordinary way to their Salvation. 'Tis true, he proceeds after this to consider the case of those Infants who were not in any apparent danger of Death, and of them he gives his opinion that they might stay about 3 years more or less, by which time they might be taught to answer somewhat, tho' they Understand it not perfectly, and so by this great Sacrament of Baptism they might be Sanctified both in Soul and Body. But 'tis evident he speaks this as his own private Opinion, and does not produce any one Author to Countenance it, nor the Opinion or Practice of any part of the Church of God concurring with him in it. 'Tis evident too, from what he said before, that he did not say this with any opinion of the Unlawfulness of Baptizing Infants: And when he advites to a delay of about three years, this will not countenance the delaying Baptism till

we are grown to years of Understanding: And if we consider the place we shall see 'tis reasonable to understand him as saying this of those Infants whose Parents themselves were but new Converts to Christianity, and who were perhaps upon the fancy of delaying their own Baptism, for 'tis evident that the general design and scope of the Oration is directed against such.

In the same Century with *Gregory Nazianzen* flourish'd *Ambrose* Bishop of *Milan*. And in his Works we see the Doctrine of the ordinary necessity of Baptism several times inculcated, and that he extends it to Infants. His Epistle to *Demetrias* a Virgin, which is the the 84th among his Epistles, was written to recommend Humility, this we see is the main subject and scope of it. After many things said there to this purpose he comes to observe that one of the most fatal and effectual arts of the Devil to overthrow the Vertue of a good Man is to tempt him to admire and esteem himself. And he speaks of those opinions which were then coming into the Church, which did exalt the power of Mans free-will, and assert that the Original Dignity of the humane Nature was not at all impair'd by the fall as a dangerous temptation to Pride and self esteem, and he calls this a fraudulent commendation of Humane Nature. Against such opinions he says, to our purpose, " Hence it is said " that *Adam's* sin hurts not any of his Posterity by " communication, but only by Example; And hence " is the Evacuation of the Baptism of Infants, " while such are said only to have the Favour " of Adoption by it, but not the Remission of any " Guilt. He herein condemns the *Pelagians*, 'tis evident, who denied the Common Doctrine of the Church concerning Original sin. And he condemns them as making the Baptism of Infants by their Opinion needless or useless in that it would conclude Baptism not necessary to them for
the

the delivering them from Original sin, which evidently speaks his belief of the necessity of it to them, in an ordinary way, for this purpose. Again, when we consider that Text of Scripture was so commonly applied to the Sacrament of Baptism by the primitive Church which we have in *John 3. 5.* we may justly believe that this good man speaks the common necessity of this Sacrament when concerning this Text he says, "Our Lord here excepts no person, no not an Infant which is not prevented by an inevitable Necessity. (*L. 2. de Abrab. Patriarch.*) Again he speaks the common necessity of this Sacrament and Builds it upon the *3d John 5th.* "The mystery of Regeneration, says he, does not come to pass without Water. For unless one be born of Water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. The Catechumen (says he,) believes in the Cross of Christ, with which also he is sign'd, but unless he be baptized in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot receive remission of his sins, nor derive the Gift of the Divine Grace (*L. de Sis. qui Mysteriis initiantur, cap. 4.*)

In the same Century with St. *Ambrse* flourish'd the great St. *Austin*, in whose Works there are often seen expressions of the Necessity of Baptism even to Infants; among many which might be produced I shall instance only in one which we have in his *3d Book of the Soul and its Original* at the *9th Chap.* where he says to the Person whom he wrote to, "Do not believe, do not say, that Infants who are prevented by Death before they are baptized can attain the remission of Original sin. We find too that he represents it as the sence of 68 Bishops assembled in a Council at *Carthage*, that they ought to be condemn'd who held the Salvation of Infants by Christ though they were not baptized. (*Ep. 90.*)

And in a Council of 60 Bishops at *Milevis* in *Nu-
midia* he says this Opinion, that Infants might be
sav'd without Baptism, was also condemn'd. Ep.
92.

It is well known that the defenders of the common
Doctrine of the Church concerning Original sin did
unanimously maintain the ordinary necessity of Bap-
tism and extend it to Infants; But I shall pro-
ceed no further in producing the Proofs of this Par-
ticular. By what has been said it may appear that
the common Necessity of Baptism to Salvation was
very early believ'd in the Church and continued
to be so, and was mention'd not by particular persons
only but by great Assemblies of the Pastours and
Guides of the Church, and this necessity they ex-
tended even to Infants.

3. We have this further ground in the Ancient
Writings of the Christian Church to believe that the
Baptism of Infants was allow'd and practiced in
the Apostles time, that we find it very early said by
several Authors that the Church was directed and
lead into this practice by the Apostles themselves:
several ancient Authours speak of it as a custome and
practice deriv'd from the Apostles. There is an
Excellent work ascrib'd to *Dionysius the Areopagite*
mention'd in *Acts* 17. which is certainly a very
ancient writing though not certainly his, as appears in
that the Question whether it were his or not lay un-
der debate about the year 420; for at that time
Theodorus the Presbyter produced the Arguments
which then were commonly urg'd for ascribing that
work to him, and against it (Dr. *Hammond* of In-
fant Baptism) this Author proposes the Question,
“ Why Children who cannot yet understand
“ Divine things are made partakers of the Sacred
“ Birth, from God, that is of Baptism? The answer
is, “ that many things unknown to us have yet a
“ Cause worthy of God: Secondly we affirm (says
he)

“ he) in this case the same things which our Divine
 “ officers of the Church being instructed by
 “ Divine Tradition have brought down to us. And
 “ Again; our Divine Guides (that is the Apo-
 “ stles, says *Maximus* upon the place) appointed
 “ that the Infants should thus be admitted accor-
 “ ding to the Sacred Manner (*Dr. Hammond* Defence,
 &c.

I might produce some other Testimonies to this matter but shall content my self to add only that of *St. Austin*. Who as he plainly shows in his writings, often enough, that the Baptizing of Infants was the ordinary practice of the Church in his Days; so he several times speaks of it as a Custome and Practice deriv'd from the Apostles and constantly retain'd in the Church from their time. Of this he says (*Serm. 10. de verb. Apost.*) “ Let no man in-
 “ sinuate any contrary Doctrine into you, this the
 “ Church has always had, has always held, this
 “ upon the Credit of our Ancestours it has receiv'd,
 “ this with perseverance to the end it keeps. In his 4th Book against the *Donatists*, at the beginning of the 24th Chapter, after he had said, “ no Christian
 “ believes that Baptism is administred to Infants in
 “ vain, he adds, And if any man would have a
 “ Divine Authority for this, although what the Uni-
 “ versal Church holds, and what does not appear
 “ instituted by any Councils, but to have been al-
 “ ways retain'd, is justly believ'd to have been de-
 “ liver'd by no less than Apostolical Authority, yet
 “ we may truly conjecture of what use and effi-
 “ cacy the Sacrament of Baptism is to Infants from
 “ the Circumcision of the Flesh which the former
 “ people receiv'd. Again, in his 28. Epistle which was written to *St. Jerom* against the Opinions of the *Pelagians* concerning the Soul of Man he says;
 “ Whosoever shall say that Infants shall be made
 “ alive in Christ though they dye without parta-

" king of this Sacrament he certainly contradicts the
 " Doctrine of the Apostles and condemns the whole
 " Church, in which 'tis usual to hasten the baptizing
 " of Infants in as much as it is believ'd, without
 " any doubt, that otherwise they cannot be made
 " alive in Christ. But he who is not made alive
 " in Christ remains under that same condem-
 " nation which the Apostle speaks of in *Rom. 5.*
 " By one Mans disobedience Judgment came upon all
 " Men to condemnation. In the latter end of the
 Epistle he says, " The Church of Christ believes that
 " the Infants of Mankind newly born cannot be
 " free from condemnation unless by the Grace of
 " Christ which is offer'd in his Sacraments. These
 " things he would not have said in an Epistle to
 a man of such Eminency and Learning as *St. Jerom*
 if he had not known he might say them, and had not
 been very well assur'd of them. In the same Epis-
 tle (referring to that of *St. Cyprian* and his Collegues to
Eldus before mention'd) he says, " The blessed *Cyprian*
 " did not form any new Decree but kept the constant
 " Faith of the Church, when with his Collegues he
 " determin'd that *an Infant new born might rightly be*
 " *baptized*, and when he corrected those who thought
 " this might not be done till they were 8 days old.

These and other very early Testimonies we have
 that the Church of God did from the first Baptize
 Infants, believ'd it might do so, and reckon'd it a
 Custome and Practice deriv'd from the Apostles and
 their times. Now it may be observ'd that these
 Testimonies are given to this matter within three or
 four Hundred years of the Death of *St. John* the
 Apostle. Can we think the Church had by that
 time utterly forgotten what was done in the
 Apostles times in this case? Can we think it vari-
 ed in this from the Apostles practice so soon
 after the Apostles, and when the Guides of the
 Church in those times appear in all their Controver-

sies with any Hereticks, that troubled the Church still to oppose them with the Apostles Doctrine and Practice? This was their refuge at all times and therefore they took care to be well acquainted with it. And had not those who liv'd so near the Apostles time great advantage to be well acquainted with the Practice of their Time? Can we believe those that live above a thousand Years after these men can so surely or so well know what was the Apostle's practice as they? Or can we reasonably believe any of our age that will pretend to say the Church did not derive this practice from the Apostles when they who liv'd near the time of the Apostles do say it did this? These things we have found said in the early Writings of the Christian Church concerning Baptism, and of that of Infants, and we find none of them contradict it in any other of the writings of those times; We do not find this practice oppos'd or condemn'd by any particular Church or body of Men in those times, nor indeed by any one Author; And shall we believe then there were witnesses against it in every Age? There never was any Body of Men that Question'd or deny'd the Lawfulness of Baptizing Infants till these men in these latter times rose up to bear their false witness against it. 'Tis observable that when *St. Austin* so often recommends this as a practice deriv'd from the Apostles, and always and Universally used in the Church, he does it not against any that then question'd or deny'd the Lawfulness of Baptizing Infants but as useful against another sort of Hereticks. I shall only add this moreover that from these things 'tis apparent that the Instances of those who did in those early times delay their Baptism, or who appear to have been baptized at grown years are no ground at all to believe that the Church did not from the first believe the Lawfulness of Baptizing Infants and practice accordingly.

THE CONCLUSION, BEING

*An Address to the People of that Sect who
Scruple the Baptizing of Infants.*

Beloved,

YE know 'tis the common Duty of Christians to concern themselves so much for the welfare and happiness of each other, as that if one sees another in any way of Errour and Wickedness, he should endeavour in what he is able and what becomes him to do, to reform and reclaim such an one. Upon this ground you think you do well in all your Endeavours to gain as many as you can over to your Opinion and Party. You must needs allow me then in this Concern, and in this Endeavour to rectifie and reduce those who I think are in a mistake, and are led into several great sins by vertue of that mistake. You cannot but own it becomes me and is my Duty to do this especially as I am (though alas too unworthy a Minister of Christ, for as such I am as it were his Ambassadour by Office, and delegated and sent to beseech sinners in Christ's stead that they would be reconcil'd to God. You cannot justly be angry with me for this Attempt, nor should you take a prejudice against me for that which I do according to my Conscience, and which I believe to be my Duty, I hope you will not so far refuse to allow the Liberty of Conscience which you do desire your selves to enjoy.

I am

I am very sure you are under a great mistake in denying the Apointment and allowance of Baptism to Infants in the Christian Church. I have consider'd I believe all the pretences by which you are seduced into this mistake, for I have consider'd all that several of your best Writers have been able to say for your Opinion, and upon a fair Examination of it all I find there is nothing that can justify it, or prove it to be a true one, but I am certain they deceive you who persuade you that it is such. You are utterly deceiv'd when you are flatter'd with the Title of *Witnesses* to a despis'd truth of Christ, to wit, *Believers Baptism*. This is not the Case. The Point and Principle upon which you divide from the Church of Christ is not, whether or no Believers may be baptized, for that we own as well as you: And we hold and teach that all grown Persons who come to be baptized, must make profession and enter into engagement to believe the Christian Religion. But you are persuaded that none but actual Believers, or those that profess themselves such in their own Persons, may be baptized, and that Infants therefore may not be so because you will not allow that they can any way make Profession, or come under an engagement of Faith. And this is no truth of Christ, there is not one Text of Scripture which expresses thus of this matter, or from whence it may be concluded. You are deceiv'd by those that give you the Name of *Baptists*, and that call your *Congregations* the *Churches of Baptized Christians*, as if none were baptized in the World but you. And your *Guides* deceive you in calling themselves the *Restorers of Holy Baptism*. For instead of restoring they rather take it away, and occasion a Common neglect of it, to say no worse, as far as their Doctrine concerning Baptism can have Influence. This must needs be the Effect of what they teach concerning it; When they speak of it as a *Superstition*.

on to believe the *Necessity of Baptism*, that is, of using an Unquestionable Ordinance of Christ, and of obeying his plain Command. And one of your Guides has said for himself and the rest of them, we may suppose, *We do not lay such stress upon the Baptism even of grown Persons as some do upon Infant Baptism: We do not say Men cannot be sav'd unless they are baptized.* Is this the way to restore Holy Baptism, or to encourage and induce Men rather to neglect and despise it? I know very well 'tis not an unusual thing for those who are born and educated among you to live till they are marriageable, yea and married, and after all to die unbaptized. And I find among those who frequent your meetings 'tis lookt upon as a very indifferent thing whether grown Persons be baptized or not. These are common Effects of their Doctrine who call themselves the restorers of Holy Baptism.

As you are certainly deceiv'd in your Opinion of Infant Baptism I find you are very unhappy by Vertue of your Mistake, and it engages you in several great sins to the exceeding hazard of your Everlasting Salvation and Happiness. By vertue of this Errour you are guilty of several sins of Omission. For while you neglect to bring your Children to Baptism, you neglect an instance of Piety which is most certainly due to Almighty God, which is the Solemn Devoting, and Dedicating your Children to serve and honour God according to the Directions and Precepts of Christian Religion, in the way appointed by him for the doing this, and that is, the Sacrament of Baptism. You neglect also an Instance of Charity to your Children whom you ought to bring as soon as you can into the Kingdom of God, for of such our Saviour says *is the Kingdom of God*; such may be admitted into it; you neglect then to bring them into the Church of God, into Covenant with Him, and so into a state of Salvation; you neglect

neglect to secure as ye might the Salvation of your Infants in case of their dying in their Infancy. By vertue of this Errour you are engag'd in a certain Disobedience to the Government under which you live, and to which in all things lawful you ought to Submit, and this is a great and heinous Sin. For this Government has decreed that the Baptism of Infants is in any wise to be retain'd in the Church. This Errour likewise engages you in the very dangerous and fatal sin of forsaking and despising the Ministers of Christ, and their administration of Divine Ordinances; You turn your backs upon those he sends to you, and follow those who come without sending. And for this you will most certainly be found guilty by our Lord at last of what he says to his Apostles concerning such, *Luke 16. 16. He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.* And this sin of despising the Ministers of Christ; and heaping to your selves Teachers exposes you, I know, to many other great Errours and Sins, and you prove therein as the Apostle foretold it would be with such, *to turn your Ears from the truth and be turn'd to fables.* You are not careful or concern'd whether or no those that teach in your Meetings are such as the Law Permits to do so, and then you must be liable to be possess'd with any untolerated principles of Religion, and be tempted to deny and forsake perhaps the most Important Principles of Christianity. And accordingly, as there have formerly been several very monstrous and blasphemous Opinions held by those of your Party, 'tis reported there are such still among you. I know you give up your selves to the Conduct of wretched men that are far from being qualified and *apt to teach*, as the Apostle requires such should be as take upon them to teach: Such as by their Ignorance are liable themselves, as the Scripture says of the *Unlearned*, to *wrest the Scriptures*

tures to their own destruction, and certainly it cannot be safe for you to follow such Guides. They take upon them to Interpret Scripture while they despise all the ordinary means to understand it. They pretend to mighty Gifts, but 'tis only Ignorant People who are the Judges of those Gifts, and they never come under the Examination of any that are well studied in Divinity. Those who are any thing acquainted with your Affairs know there is good reason to believe, That some among you have qualified themselves to be Teachers according to the Act of Exemption, who as they have no other Qualification, so they took this chiefly for the Benefit of being exempted too from troublesome and chargeable offices in the places where they live. And this Exemption they appear to have sought not for the sake of applying themselves the more entirely to the work of Teaching, for they are entirely employ'd at the same time in trade and worldly business. The most of your Teachers are such as were never educated to know much, and give themselves no leisure to study or learn, but are almost wholly applied to the pursuit of worldly gains in some secular trade and business. 'Tis no wonder then if under the Guidance of such men you should remain very Ignorant in Christian Religion and be led into many and damnable Errours. The disadvantage and unhappiness of your separation from the Church and chusing your own Teachers shows it self in the great diversity of Opinions that is among your own Party, and your disagreements even to the refusing of Communion to one another sometimes thereupon. Your *unlearned* Guides prove *unstable* too, and leave you so. And as the Guides which your party have sometimes set up among them have been known to engage you in many monstrous wickednesses in Practice, so as to expose you to the severest Capital Punishments in the several Counties where you have spread, so you are liable still

to be directed and incited to the same things. This is your sad and deplorable case, such as would move compassion in the hardest heart, that did but a little consider it, and the tendencies of it, with respect to your eternal state in another World: And it must needs move a great deal of compassion and pity in any one that has but any measure of Christian Charity, and make every such person ready and desirous to do all that he has power, and that his station and calling will allow him to do, to rescue you from such sin and danger.

Upon this ground I set my self about this work; that I might convince you of that mistake which turns you out of your way, and engages you in so much Sin, as has been said, and exposes you to a great deal more. I profess to you I have Compassion for your Souls, and am under a great concern for you by reason of the Danger which I apprehend you to be in of everlasting Perdition. I solemnly declare to you that I believe my self all that I have here deliver'd to you for truth. I have compos'd this Work in the fear of God, and as sensible that I must give an account of it at the day of Judgment. I hope I have had the Assistance of the good Spirit of God in the doing it, whose Assistance I daily implore. I think it compos'd under the influence of one of the best Gifts of the Spirit, which is *Charity*. I am sure I seek not your harm in any respect in this Endeavour, and should be griev'd if it should any way redound to your prejudice, which I cannot think it can do unless by your own default. I seek only to turn you from Errour to Truth, and from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God. I seek to gain you to Christ by gaining you to the Church. I should be glad if I could gain many of you by this Endeavour from the Error of your Way. But I shall think it worth all the time and labour which I have spent in it, and not at all repent
of

of it if I can gain but one Soul of you ; *As there is joy in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth* ; and there would be joy in the Church for every one of you that were restor'd and united to it ; so I should have great joy and satisfaction, and most heartily thank Almighty God for the Favour, if I could be instrumental in so blessed a Work, tho by the greatest labour and trouble it could cost me.

I beseech you now that you would not be wanting to your selves in this matter. All that the Ministers of Christ can do for your Salvation will be of no avail, if you be wanting to your selves ; if you will not set about what you can and what you ought to do towards your own Information and Amendment : Remember the Apostles Direction is to *work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling*. I doubt it is the common Case of you all, that it is by neglect of your selves that you are engag'd in this way of Error and Wickedness. Either you have been educated in this way, and have had nothing taught you but what might possess you with a belief that it is true and right, and you have taken up your Religion upon trust, pinn'd your Faith upon your Parents Sleeve, and never examin'd whether they have set you right or not : Or you are such as having been baptized in your Infancy, and never well catechized nor instructed in Religion, while those that should have done it either could not by their death, or would not by vertue of their own neglect, and you following the Vanities and Vices of Youth, have neglected your selves, and fell into this Snare of the Devil for want of due consideration, when you did think fit to apply your selves to some profession of Religion. I do not think you were so faithful to your Souls as to keep close to the Ministers and Ordinances of Christ, and in that way wait upon him for his Instruction. I doubt you gave ear only or chiefly to those that would seduce you, and would

not

not go to a Minister and propose to him the Arguments and Motives by which you were seduced into this Error. Let me intreat you then at length to take a due care of your selves. I beseech you to read and consider what is here said to inform and instruct you. I have made all things as plain and clear, I think, as I could; I have made the Work as compleat and full as was necessary, and as might be in so little room. Do not leave the consideration of it to your Guides alone, and such as make a gain of seducing you; consider it your selves, try all things and hold fast that which is good; you are capable to consider it for your selves. But do not satisfy your selves with a slight and careless reading of it, consider it well, and compare what is here said with the Holy Scriptures. Do not come to the Reading of it with Prejudice. Do not before you consider what is here said, fix in your Minds the Belief that this Book designs to deceive you: Believe me 'tis the Design of it to undeceive you. Do not positively determine then in the matter till you have well consider'd it. Betake your selves to read it with a Design to try and examine it fairly, do not condemn it first and try it afterwards. You should come to the reading and consideration of this Book, and such as this with an humble and modest Opinion of your selves. You must own your selves to be fallible and liable to mistake, and then you may believe it possible that you may in this be in a mistake. Think if you have a little consider'd the matter that you may consider it a little more, and you ought certainly to consider very well a Principle upon which you differ from the Church, and which makes you condemn the greatest part of the Church of God in all ages. If you have never so great an Opinion of some Men who believe that Infants may not be baptized, you should believe, as you may, that as wise, as pious Men as they can deserve to be accounted, and those who were as capable to apprehend

prehend the Truth as they can be, have in all Ages from the Apostles times believ'd the Baptizing of Infants to be lawful. The greatest Lights of the Christian Church have believ'd this, those who have defended the true Doctrines of Christianity against the Opposers of their times. The Glorious Martyrs of old times have held this belief, those who have born their Testimony to the Christian Religion with their Blood. If such Men may have been in a mistake why may not you be so? Read then I beseech you what is here said with a sincere desire and design to see, to know better, whether you are in a mistake or not. I beseech you to be afraid, as you ought, of omitting and neglecting your Duty, in not Baptizing your Infants, as much at least as of profaning an ordinance of Christ by having it administred to those who hold and receive it. You ought to be afraid of adding a Negative Command to the Commands of Christ, as well as of adding a Positive one; and so you should be afraid of making that unlawful which he has not made unlawful, as well as of holding that allow'd or appointed which is not allow'd or appointed. And I would beg you in reading and considering what is here said not to depend upon your selves alone, do not go about this in Confidence of your own strength. Pray seriously to God for the Illumination and Instruction of the Holy Spirit, and use also the means of Instruction which Jesus Christ has set up and provided the Church with, by which the Illumination of the Holy Spirit is ordinarily convey'd. If any thing especially be difficult to you, if you cannot see the force and conclusion of some Answers to your Objections, or some of the Arguments against your Errour, I advise you to go to some Minister of the Church, propose your Thoughts and Doubts to him, and desire him to assist you. 'Tis the Duty of the Ministers of the Church to do so, and I do not believe any one would reject you or
refuse

refuse to give you his Assistance. In this Course you may hope on good ground that the Spirit of God will teach you and lead you into the Truth. But if you will be wanting to your selves, if you will do none of these things, if you will give up your selves to the Conduct of those who will harden and confirm you in your Errour, you will be found Obstinate and Wilful in your Ignorance and Errour, and that is guilty in the sight of God, and it would add an exceeding guilt to all that you do in consequence of your Errour. You must know this Book will rise up in Judgment against you and condemn you, if through your neglect of a due consideration of it you should not be rectified and reclaim'd by it. If you will not be perswaded to these things I have advis'd, I should grievously lament your Case, and have reason to fear you are, in the Just Judgment of God for your forsaking the Church, given up to strong delusions. and to believe lies that you may be damn'd. But I had much rather *hope better things of you and things that accompany Salvation*, and therefore will do so as long as I can; And as I have with this hope compos'd this work, so I shall continue heartily to Pray to God for you, That it may please him to show to you the things which belong to your peace before they are hid from your Eyes; that you may be rescued from the snare of the Devil; that this Endeavour may be a means to convert many of you from the Errours of your Way, and may save your Souls from Death. To him be all Glory and Praise for Ever and Ever.

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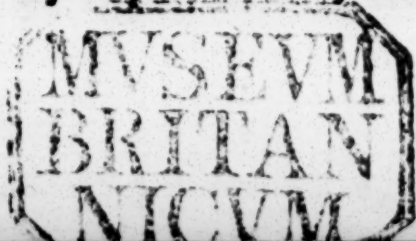
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